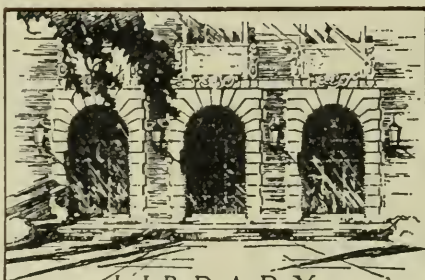


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[Wallace, Ellen]

K I N G ' S C O P E .

A NOVEL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

“MR. WARRENNE,” “MARGARET CAPEL.”

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I

L O N D O N :

RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1849.

LONDON:
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The village and manor of King's Cope, which, as well as the extensive grounds surrounding the mansion, have been for centuries the property of this family, present so many exquisite points of scenery, that it is a matter of regret that the house, built in the reign of James the Second, should not better correspond with the beauty of its situation. But at that era, domestic architecture was more convenient than picturesque; and the square proportions and numerous white-framed windows of the present edifice, but ill-replace, to an artist's eye, the gable ends and latticed casements of an earlier style.

Near the house, broad avenues of chestnuts, and glassy sheets of water, artificially supplied, give to that part of the pleasure-grounds an aspect more in unison with the building; but farther on the trees grow more wildly, the grass is tufted with fern, and a shallow brook winds its way among the stern old oaks and bushy hawthorns at its own lazy and fantastic

will. Here and there a hawthorn older than its fellows has been undermined by the stream and fallen forward, so as to form a rustic bridge from one side of the brook to the other.

This has been the most attractive spot in the park to the children of the family ever since the Knights Hospitallers ceded the manor of King's Cope to Sir Bigod Scawen, in the reign of Edward the First, down to the sultry August morning in the time of King William the Fourth, when my story begins.

Just where the water glides beneath the mossy trunks, and ripples against the boughs which dip into the stream,—where the bank is trellised with slender roots, and studded with tufts of forget-me-not, and other marshy plants,—where yellow water-lilies float capriciously into the very middle of the brook, and shoals of the smaller fish dart backwards and forwards among their glossy leaves,—on one

of those moss-grown trunks a boy about twelve years old was seated. He had a fishing-rod in one hand, and a book in the other, which engrossed so much of his attention that his neglected line floated slowly down the gentle current, and entangled itself among the long stalks of the water-lilies.

A little girl, some two years younger than the boy, was kneeling on the root of the tree just where it projected from the bank, and making herself a nosegay of forget-me-nots.

Even in the cool nook which the children had selected, with the water gliding beneath their feet, and the thick branches meeting overhead, the heat was oppressive.

"Hugh! your line!" exclaimed the little girl, suddenly raising her large hazel eyes from her flowers.

The boy read on.

"Oh, Hugh! such a beautiful dace! you might have caught him if you had been looking!" she cried, after another pause.

The book appeared to be a stronger attraction than the fish, and the boy never lifted his eyes from the page.

The little girl pushed back her dark-brown curls, laid her flowers on the bank beside her straw-bonnet, and clasping her small white hands together on her knees, fixed her brilliant eyes in silence on her brother.

She was singularly beautiful; her head and neck statuesque in their outline, and adorned by a profusion of the richest coloured hair, clustering like tendrils round her broad forehead and slender throat; and, in the depth of her large eyes, set like jewels beneath her square brows, and her raised nostril and tremulous upper-lip, an observer might detect the germs of an impetuous and affectionate character.

There was a strong family likeness between the brother and the sister; but his hair was lighter than hers, and his eyes darker, and his eyebrows as black as ink: though now

drawn together in the earnestness with which he was reading, yet in repose their lines described a calmer and firmer temperament.

At last, with a long-drawn sigh, he lifted up his head.

“Oh! to live so — to die so!” he exclaimed, in that deep-felt tone of enthusiasm that makes the voice vibrate with its truth.

“If I had your horrid sea-book in my hands I would tear it in pieces!” exclaimed the little girl, the colour rising into her face.

“Would you, little Anne? Take it, then,” said the boy good-humouredly, throwing the book on the bank beside her.

It was Southey’s “Life of Nelson.”

“I can’t bear it. I know you will end by going to sea,” said Anne, impatiently.

“I hope I shall begin by going to sea. I shall end, you know, by coming to live with you at Datchley,” said Hugh, stooping to disengage his line from the water-lilies.

"Ah! that will be nice!" said Anne, smiling at her brother.

"It is hotter than ever, to-day,—too hot even to fish," said Hugh, unjointing his fishing-rod.

"You have only a dace, and two shabby little perch," said Anne, looking into the wicker-basket.

"Better luck next time, little Anne," said Hugh, coming to the bank, and sitting down by her side.

"What can Henry want here, I wonder?" said Anne, drawing her brows together, and turning her head into profile with that sudden gesture of inquiry which gives so much spirit and intelligence to the features.

Henry, the eldest brother, was now seen coming towards them through the brushwood; a self-sufficient, unpleasant boy, resembling very closely a large proportion of young people, in whom it would require a microscopic eye to distinguish any amount of good or

generous feeling. Selfish, false, calculating, and inferior, he was formed to be liked and well spoken of by the many, who delight above all things to recognise their own image in each other, and who are impatient beyond measure of plain-dealing and truth.

“So, you two, skulking together as usual,” he remarked, as he flung himself down on the grass.

“As usual,” said Anne, with an indifferent glance over her shoulder at her eldest brother.

“Would not the fellows at Eton laugh at you, if they could see you always trotting about with your sister !” said Henry, contemptuously.

“Let them laugh,” replied Hugh ; “it is all the same to me. Besides, I shall soon be out of their way.”

This indifference to public opinion, which had already rather distinguished Hugh among his companions, was perfectly incomprehensible

to Henry, who was invariably guided in all his actions by what "the fellows" said and thought. He stared at his brother without making any answer.

Anne's look changed to a glance of defiance: Henry was treading on dangerous ground when he attempted to interfere between herself and Hugh.

"What do you think Ritson says?" asked Henry, breaking the lazy silence which had lasted for some time.

"Can't think," said Hugh.

"He says he is quite sure my father is going to marry again."

"Good heaven!" exclaimed Hugh.

"It's false!" cried Anne, her eyes gleaming, and her whole face dyed one indignant scarlet: "it's false!"

"What do you think of that?" asked Henry, with a laugh.

He was such a good-tempered boy, — he generally laughed; only his laugh was a little

too like a sneer to please very fastidious people.

“Are you joking, Hal?” asked Hugh, anxiously.

“Not I, faith,” replied Henry; “not a bit of it. Ritson has had orders to put my mother’s flower-garden in order, and to get on with that stone-screen which is to divide it from the park, and to look out for a pair of ponies for the little phaeton my mother used to drive.”

“Oh! Hugh, poor mamma—only last December—and—and—Hugh—” faltered Anne, melting into tears.

“And this is August: what more would you have?” said Henry, carelessly.

“Never mind, Anne,—it may not be true,” whispered Hugh, looking very pale, however; “we won’t believe it as long as we can help ourselves.”

“After all, it doesn’t much matter to you and me,” said Henry, catching idly at the

branches over his head: "this place is entailed on me, and you *must* have Datchley; so there's only Miss Anne to be consulted, and she, it seems, begs to decline the honour. I agree with her: as far as she is concerned, it is rather a bore to have a step-mother."

"Hugh! oh, Hugh!" sobbed Anne, clinging round her brother's neck.

"Don't cry, little Anne," said Hugh, soothingly; "if the worst comes, it will be but for a time: when I come home from sea, and settle with you at Datchley, it won't much matter then who is mistress here."

"But it is so long to wait," murmured Anne.

"Yes, a long time: but we have both much to do. You will have to study, while I shall be serving my country, I hope; and then we shall feel that we have earned the right to sit down and enjoy ourselves."

"Well, you two beat anything I ever saw:

there are no more like you, I am sure," said Henry, looking down on his brother with the superiority that a boy of fourteen naturally feels over one of twelve.

"He can feel nothing!" exclaimed Anne, indignantly.

"Pardon me!" exclaimed Henry, "I could feel a great many things; but on this occasion I simply feel that my father has a perfect right to please himself."

"How a right?" cried Anne; "was mamma less to him than to us that he should forget her before we do?"

"Apparently," replied Henry, stretching himself more comfortably on the grass.

"I shall hate her!" exclaimed Anne, with another burst of tears.

"You will do very wisely," said Henry, who seemed rather to enjoy the child's vehemence; "only if you cry from this time till Christmas you won't alter the fact."

Anne's tears still continued to fall on her

clusters of forget-me-nots; Hugh, kneeling beside her was trying in his blunt way to comfort her. Henry found this stupid work. After yawning once or twice he rose to go away; but with his usual sensitive consideration he seemed to think that Anne had better be left alone.

"I say, Hugh, come and have a game at billiards," he said.

"Not now, Hal," replied Hugh, glancing at Anne as a reason for his refusal.

Henry looked at them both as they sat together on the grass, and then shrugging his shoulders with a contemptuous expression he turned away to seek amusement elsewhere.

It was a rough night in December: the wind roared among the leafless trees, and rocked their huge limbs backwards and forwards with a hoarse groaning sound. Sometimes there was a lull in the storm, and the

raindrops might be distinctly heard falling from the eaves, while the gusts became gradually fainter, as if retreating slowly towards the horizon; and then the wind burst forth again with renewed fury, lifting up the rain like a curtain, and dashing it headlong against the windows, and sweeping with a noise like the distant ocean through the wood that skirted the house.

These dreary sounds seemed only to enhance the warmth and luxury of the scene within, where the blazing wood-fire cast a fitful reflection on the carved furniture and thick damask curtains, and shed a broad glow over the gorgeous Persian rug. On one side of the hearth, Henry Scawen was lounging idly in a deep arm-chair, drawn to the angle of the chimney; while Hugh and Anne were seated on the rug at the opposite corner, Hugh leaning against an ottoman, and Anne resting her head on her brother's shoulder.

The boys had come home for the Christ-

mas holidays, Hugh a little better, and Henry a little worse than he went ; for people whether young or old, seldom stand altogether still in their moral career ; and therefore it is not much amiss that they should try to go forward, when their only alternative is that they must go backward.

Anne, poor child, had very nearly fulfilled her brother's ironical prediction, and spent all her leisure time in crying, from Midsummer to Christmas.

Therefore she was not quite so blooming as when she was gathering flowers at the brook : she had grown thin and pallid, and her large eyes were circled with a violet shade, as you often see in people who have a good deal to cry about. Her grief at the loss of her mother had been like most children's sorrow, brief and stormy ; but her memory was tenacious, and the idea of her mother being supplanted, was more shocking even than her loss. Therefore she suffered

under a sense of injury the keenest that could be inflicted upon a human creature—she suffered in her first and most sacred affections—child as she was, the wound matured her heart: while all the friends of the family congratulated Mr. Scawen on his judicious conduct in marrying at once, and not waiting till his daughter was old enough to feel the difference between the old and the new mother.

The wind still shook the trees without, and the rain splashed against the windows.

“What a bore every thing is!” said Henry, extending himself in his easy-chair.

“I always fancy it cold when the wind blows,” said Anne, shivering.

“Cold! if that were all!” exclaimed Henry, contemptuously.

“What’s the matter, Hal?” asked Hugh.

“The matter?” returned Henry; “every thing is the matter. This place, I do believe, is the dullest under heaven. I am sick of

my life! Besides, I want my dinner. I should like to know how long it will be before my father arrives with his bride?"

A sob from Anne broke the silence.

"Yes, I advise you to cry, Mademoiselle," said Henry, ironically; "I can't imagine a more judicious welcome for your new mamma."

"Don't teaze her, Hal," said Hugh, resolutely.

"Young ladies soon develope now a-days," continued Henry, wholly disregarding his brother's admonition. "Anne, it seems, is to be a sentimental character; I am sorry for it; I had rather, my dear, that you had turned out a dasher."

Anne was too painfully engrossed with another subject to mind her brother's taunts; she scarcely heard them.

"Hugh," she whispered, "I'll never call Mrs. Scawen, mamma, never while I live."

"Nor I!" said Hugh, decidedly.

"I hate December," said Anne, raising her

head, and looking vaguely at the heavy damask curtains, slightly swayed by the wind; "it always seems to me as if something dreadful happens in this month."

"It is the black month of our family," said Hugh, gravely.

For there was a worn-out superstition which everybody had discarded but these two children, that the month of December was adverse to the Scawen family, as that of November was said to be towards the House of Ker Ellio, in Bretagne, in one of Eugene Sue's romances; and certainly it could not be disputed that of all the domestic afflictions which had occurred since the time of Bigod Scawen, by far the greater number had fallen in the month of December.

It had also been said in old times (though of course, people had long ceased to believe it) that a kind of phantom was heard (not seen), before any death that might occur in the month of December, but which was silent

whatever might happen during any other month.

This strange visitant bore some resemblance to the frightful Balayeuse in the palace of the King of Prussia, only that in this instance there was a sound as of a person dragging after them a heavy burden, which every now and then they seemed to attempt to lift up, and let fall with a heavy sound; Anne had heard this the night before her mother's death, passing through the long gallery, and down the great staircase, the burden falling heavily from stair to stair. And her mother hearing it also, had called the nurse to her bedside and said,

“Nurse, go to my little Anne, the Burden is going through the house, and if she wakes and hears it, she will be frightened.”

And Anne remembered that she was sitting up in her little bed, with her hair rising, and the drops on her brow, and her eyes distended with terror, when the nurse came in

and soothed her, and sat with her till she went to sleep again. And as the next morning she was told that her mother was dead, it is not surprising that she placed some faith in the legend of the Burden, for so the phantom was called.

“I was born in December,” said Hugh, thoughtfully, after a long silence on both sides.

Anne said nothing, but her arm tightened round her brother's neck. No Scawen, if he could help it, should be born in December.

“Well, I was born in June, that's all I know about it,” said Henry, “and so much the better for me if your stupid tales are true. However, my father was not born in the black month, so I need not expect to come into my property sooner than other people. When I do, wont I lead a jolly life ! ”

This affectionate speech, which glanced at

his father's dissolution as the probable date of his beginning to enjoy himself, disconcerted Anne.

"He is a wicked boy," she whispered to Hugh, "and I am glad you will have Datchley when you are of age, without waiting for anybody to die."

"He need not talk of being born in an unlucky month, with the prospect of Datchley," said Henry, discontentedly. "I can't think what my grandfather Lascelles was about."

"He even grudges you Datchley," said Anne, her beautiful lip curling with scorn.

"That's hardly to be wondered at, when he grudges my father King's Cope," replied Hugh, with a smile.

Anne hazarded another scornful glance at Henry, over her brother's shoulder.

"I think I shall take to chewing opium," remarked Henry, after a pause; "that might make one's life more bearable. Hugh, ring for some more wood, and somebody look for

my handkerchief. It is on that table, child ; I left it by the book I was reading."

Hugh rang for the wood, and Anne brought her brother his handkerchief.

" Why, good heaven ! child, you are in mourning !" exclaimed Henry, observing for the first time that his sister wore a grey cachemere frock, braided with black.

" I was to go out of mourning on Christmas-day," said Anne, in a trembling voice ; " it was on Christmas-eve that — mamma" — she stopped.

" A singular compliment, on my word, to receive the new Mrs. Scawen in a mourning dress. Just like my father ! I wonder he did not have the house hung with black. He might, I do think, have attended a little more to the decencies of life on such an occasion. But it is not *my* affair—don't think *I* care how you dress !"

Anne knew him too well to think any such thing ; she went back to Hugh, and rested

her head on his shoulder as he stood by the fire.

“ There ’s the carriage ! ” cried Henry, starting up. “ Thank heaven, I shall get something to eat at last ! Simmons, dinner directly ! I am sure Mrs. Scawen will be impatient for it after her journey.”

This witticism was unrelished by Hugh and Anne. They had dined at two, and Miss Elder was then waiting tea for them in the study, and, besides, dinner was not then uppermost in their thoughts. They shrank closer together. Hugh, pale and firm, as if resolved to suppress all outward feeling, Anne shivering, white, with swimming eyes, and the dark tendrils of her hair all ruffled and displaced by leaning her head against the collar of Hugh’s coat.

Mr. and Mrs. Scawen entered.

Anne saw, as through a mist, a tall thin woman, with a great row of teeth. She trembled from head to foot.

Henry stepped carelessly forward.

“ My eldest boy,” said Mr. Scawen, indicating him with all the pride that a father would naturally experience in the possession of so valuable a son.

“ I’m delighted to make his acquaintance;” said the lady, taking his hand. “ And these two, Mr. Scawen ?”

“ This is Hugh ; the fellow has set his heart upon going to sea ; he means to be an admiral, like his great uncle. And this is Anne. Come and kiss your new mamma.”

This delightful ceremony was instantly put in execution. Anne shuddering from head to foot, and Hugh looking nervously on, as if he feared that his turn would come next.

But Mrs. Scawen was a very proper person. She had no idea of kissing boys ; she merely shook hands with him, and then unfastening her heavy velvet cloak, sat down in the late Mrs. Scawen’s pretty tapestried arm-chair.

This outrage very nearly destroyed the very small share of composure that Anne had left. Hugh watched her quivering lips with the conviction that she could not hold out long, and the hope that by good fortune dinner might be announced and the room cleared, before she gave way altogether.

The butler was just in time. Hardly had the last fold of Mrs. Scawen's satin gown disappeared through the door, before Anne threw herself on the ground, beside her mother's chair, embracing it passionately with a burst of sobs and tears.

"Oh, Hugh! oh, Hugh!" she exclaimed, throwing herself helplessly into her brother's arms as he knelt beside her; "I did not think it would be so horrible—I dreaded it, but it is worse than I expected; to see her choose out my own mamma's chair; one would say she did it on purpose!"

"She's a wretch!" said Hugh, with energy;

“ she shall never come to Datchley when we live there.”

“ No, never ! ” said Anne.

The name of Datchley always brought a smile to her face. She dried her tears.

“ How happy we shall be there ! ” she said.

“ Yes,” said Hugh, smoothing his sister’s tangled hair ; “ we shall always be together then ; and we agree so well, don’t we, Anne ? ”

“ Oh, yes ! we never quarrel,” said Anne.

“ All our troubles will be over then ; we shall have had them young — some people do,” said Hugh, thoughtfully.

“ Yes, indeed, Hugh.”

“ A beautiful place, and money enough, and no one to disturb us, nothing to make us unhappy ; we will have a little boat-house, and a boat on the river, and the finest riding-horses that I can buy, and a nice little carriage with a pair of ponies for you, and a flower-

garden—plenty of beautiful flowers all the year round; and books for winter evenings, and music. You must make haste, Anne, and learn to sing, I love music so much.”

“ That I will, Hugh.”

“ I look forward to that as the object of my life,” said Hugh earnestly; “ I go to sea that I may deserve it.”

Anne sighed.

“ A slothful person, who had done nothing for his country, would have no right to sit down in such a paradise,” said Hugh.

And however grown-up people might laugh at a boy who really thought he was offering a service to his country in becoming a midshipman on board a man-of-war, he was perfectly serious in this idea.

“ I often think of that verse, Hugh,” said Anne; ‘ And so Thou bringest them unto the Haven where they would be.’ Datchley is our haven.”

“ So it is, Anne,” said Hugh, smiling.

“ I say, Hugh, just see if my eyes look red ? ” said Anne.

Hugh looked down into the splendid hazel eyes that were raised to his.

“ Just a little at the corners,” he said, beginning to rub them with his handkerchief.

“ Oh ! but it wont rub off, Hugh,” said Anne laughing, and putting her arm round his neck. “ Come, Miss Elder will be waiting tea for us.”

CHAPTER II.

Leo : Do, try thy worst :—put absence in the scale
And memory and love shall weigh it down !
Thou canst not count the pulses of this heart,
And dar'st not check them. They are all for him.
And I am strong in love as thou in hate ;
And mine the triumph, silent though it be !

ANON.

MR. SCAWEN was of a character sufficiently common in England, being sullen and morose in his temper, with little or no tenderness of feeling, a very strong opinion of his own merits, and a perpetual sense of injury that other people did not subscribe to the views he entertained of his good qualities.

He was moral in his habits, he sometimes did good ; he always went to church ; he was very ready to take offence, and he despised women.

Of the regard he had entertained for the first Mrs. Scawen he had just given proof, by supplying her place in his home, and (we will suppose) in his heart. And as she had been very lovely, very gentle, very conscientious—an affectionate mother, and a most submissive wife, he showed at once a contented mind, and a sensible disposition in his choice of a substitute.

As he was a man of large fortune, no sooner was his first wife dead, than his friends pressed their daughters upon his acceptance after the manner of the English, who certainly attach a price to the blessings of matrimony beyond what is to be met with in any other country; but even before he had consumed the proper quantity of crape and black-edged paper, he thought fit to select for himself a lady of a certain age, the widow of a Scottish gentleman of good family. The Mrs. Morton, who was so fortunate as to become the second Mrs. Scawen, was one of those terrible creatures called

fine women. She had large white teeth that looked as if they could grind you to powder;—hard bright eyes, without the relief of eye-lashes; very white thin shoulders; a cruel voice, and a bony hand.

Mrs. Scawen had a fiery temper, but a cowardly disposition; she soon found that in point of ill-humour Mr. Scawen had decidedly the advantage of her; so that after a little wrangling, she thought it more prudent to subside into an apparently submissive wife; but as ill-temper, like smoke, is very persevering in finding an outlet, and is very careful to vent itself upon those who are perfectly unable to defend themselves, Mrs. Scawen did very wisely to transfer her attacks from her husband, who could retaliate, to those members of his family who could not.

When she first came to King's Cope, she hated all his three children. To the sons this dislike was of little importance; they kept as much as possible out of her

way ; and when she tried to make mischief between them and their father, which she very often did, — they told their own story boldly enough, and Mr. Scawen went into a passion with the whole party, and there was an end. But it may easily be imagined that towards the little girl, Mrs. Scawen had the power and the will to put in practice a hundred means of aggravation, which would have been powerless against the boys.

In fact she disliked Anne more heartily than either of her brothers. Henry, the eldest, would, as a matter of course, succeed to his father's estates ; Hugh was amply provided for by his grandfather's property in Buckinghamshire. These things could not be altered, she knew ; but every penny that might be laying by for Anne's fortune, she looked upon as subtracted from her lawful gains ; and though she was left in profound ignorance of its amount, yet she fed her wrath by think-

ing that if Anne did not exist, it might be added to her stipulated jointure.

In the middle ages such a stepmother would have poisoned the girl at once, and she would have done more boldly, and perhaps more kindly, than by thus nursing evil feelings against her for years together.

But when Mrs. Scawen found that Henry seldom took any notice of Anne except to pull her hair, or to frighten her by asking how her teeth were growing, she felt her heart a little softened towards him. A double portion of her dislike, therefore, fell upon Hugh, who was ardently attached to his sister, and not ashamed of showing it, even in the face of his formidable stepmother. Consequently, her first care on being installed at King's Cope, was to separate Anne as much as possible from her brother. She was not to ride with Hugh any more; she was not to row in the boat, or to wander about the park with him. Mrs. Scawen "wondered how Miss Elder could ever

have permitted such a thing. At eleven years of age, a girl was much too old to be romping about with great boys. It was no wonder that Miss Scawen's hair was always rumpled, and that three of her frocks had been torn, when she was suffered to roam about from morning till night with a rude Eton boy like Hugh."

It was in vain Anne proved (rendered desperate by the occasion, and surmounting her fear of Mrs. Scawen's fierce eyes and large teeth), that she had only one frock torn, and that was by Henry, who caught roughly at it as she was coming down stairs; that she never went out with Hugh except during her play-hours; that Miss Elder was almost always in sight, and that her own mamma had allowed and encouraged them to be together.

Mrs. Scawen merely replied with much bitterness: "but I, who am *not* your mamma, do not mean to allow it any more."

They were already not at their first differ-

ence, and her reply contained an allusion to a stormy subject. Anne had steadily refused, (as she said she would), to call Mrs. Scawen mamma.

Several very angry scenes had been the consequence between Mr. Scawen and his daughter, which ended in violent fits of hysterical weeping on the child's part, and a storm of passionate invectives on his. Miss Elder had vainly endeavoured to shake her pupil's resolution. Her arguments were of no effect.

“ Mrs. Scawen was not her mamma : she had a mother in heaven. When her own mamma died, Miss Elder had said that she was ‘ not lost, but gone before.’ It would be disowning her to give her name to any other person. Her father had done so,—it was possible that he might have a right to act as he had done : but she (and Hugh) meant never to forget or to replace her. She would submit to be guided by the reason of those older than herself where she wanted a guide : but those who

wished to break the link which still united her to her lost mother, would find their labour thrown away."

Passion sometimes lends to children words and arguments beyond their years. Miss Elder gave up the point: so did Mr. Scawen. Mrs. Scawen had never seemed to insist upon it, but she found a hundred means of revenging the slight put upon her.

She was quite aware that she could not inflict a deeper wound upon Anne than in separating her from her brother Hugh. Not only was his society inexpressibly dear to her, but all her little enjoyments were dependent upon him. He weeded her garden, he planted her flowers, he bought her fancy rabbits, and it was with the savings of his pocket-money that her little book-shelves were stored with children's works. During his holidays she never had a wish ungratified, and when he went to school, it was one long anticipation until their next joyous meeting. But now

her play-hours hung so heavily that she would rather have gone on with her lessons, and Miss Elder was grieved to see how drooping and listless she became. Even the servants began to remark that Miss Anne had done nothing but mope since her new mamma was brought home. She had begun the troubles of life pretty early. Hers were no fictitious sorrows. And people who underrate the sufferings that children can undergo, must either have short memories or dull imaginations.

As Hugh no longer dined in the study, the one short happy hour which Anne spent in his company, was when they met in the drawing-room after tea.

Although Mrs. Scawen's presence was a drawback, yet over the chess-board they contrived to discuss their future plans, and bewail their present restraint.

"I'll tell you what, Anne," said Hugh, pausing with his hand on a bishop; "I have altered my mind, you shall have a chestnut

at Datchley. Lady Orrington rides such a beautiful chestnut."

"Oh! Hugh, I like a grey best—do you mean to take my queen?"

"No, I'll let you keep the queen; but you have not seen Lady Orrington's chestnut; next time she calls if she is on horseback, go to the staircase window and take a good look at it, because you shall have which you like."

"Oh! thank you, Hugh; and about the sea-gulls on the lawn?"

"We will build little roost-houses for them to live in, close to the water."

"And we will always feed them ourselves, Hugh, for that will make them tame."

"I say, little Anne, do you know why I hate blue satin?"

"I think, Hugh, it is because certain Peacocks are fond of wearing it."

"You shall never have a blue gown when we live at Datchley."

Anne laughed.

“I say, Anne, what a scraggy neck she has ! ”

“And her mouth, Hugh, like a crocodile.”

“Or a hyena, when she grins. Don't you hate to see her play the harp ? ”

“I had rather she played, because then we can talk.”

“True, little Anne.”

“Hugh, what has become of all my pawns ? ”

“I have taken them ; there, you may have one back.”

“I had rather have a knight.”

“Don't you wish you may get it, little Anne ? ”

Anne tried to reach the knight, Hugh snatched it off the board,—between them, two or three pieces fell down.

“What is that noise ? ” exclaimed Mr. Scawen looking up from his book.

“You may well ask, Mr. Scawen ! ” said

his wife rising from her harp. "It is Anne romping with her brother. It would be advisable, I think, for the future, that she should be forbidden to play at chess with him. I am sure I have done all I can to restrain her outrageous spirits. They were fighting, I believe. I am often bewildered to know how to make Miss Scawen behave like a young lady!"

"You will play at chess no more!" said Mr. Scawen; "you hear! never let me see you on any occasion play at chess again!"

All this time, Henry, who had been lounging near her harp, and politely thanking her for pieces of which he had not heard a note, was fast growing into favour.

"It is a comfort, Mr. Scawen, to see your eldest son becoming all you could wish!" she remarked as the young people left the room.

But Mr. Scawen, who loved Hugh the best of his children, made no reply;—a common

habit of his when he did not agree with the speaker.

In default of the chess-board, Hugh be-
thought himself of establishing a corres-
pondence with his sister. Their letters were
short and simple enough, and generally ran
in this manner :—

“ LITTLE ANNE,

“ I saw you had a mind to cry last night,
but I am glad you did not, for the Peacock
would have been pleased. Never mind !
We will have a chess-board at Datchley,
though we shall then be able to talk to
each other without all this bother. Send me
down an answer with your dinner things.
Susan will give it to Hassel. What a voice
the Peacock has ! Should not you like to
wring her neck ?

“ Your affectionate Hugh.”

To which Anne replied,

“DEAR HUGH,

“If you will write to me every day, I shall not mind; and I shall always have your notes to keep when you are gone back to school. The Peacock came into the study this morning, and scolded me because I did not remember about the Edict of Nantes. Oh! how happy we shall be together at Datchley!

“Your affectionate Anne.”

Miss Elder offered no opposition to this interchange of letters. She saw that Mrs. Scawen was doing all that could be done to ruin a fine disposition in her step-daughter, and she felt it clearly her duty to undo, as much as possible, her evil work.

But the experience of every day shows us how much more easy it is to do harm than to do good. Anne was of an age to feel, and of a character to resent deeply. She knew herself to be an object of direct perse-

cution to her step-mother. She had too much intelligence to be persuaded into thinking all this harshness was intended for her good, or that it arose from any deep interest in her welfare.

Miss Elder's only course was to keep silence upon all Mrs. Scawen's proceedings, and by the mildness of her own treatment to counteract the perpetual irritation of that lady's system. Happy it was for Anne that she possessed so judicious a friend as Miss Elder. That her temper was not wholly ruined, and her character embittered by the sufferings of her oppressed and harassed childhood, might be attributed solely to the calm and watchful solicitude of her governess.

Miss Elder was then about three and thirty ; she was remarkably elegant in her person, and refined in her mind and feelings. Of a very calm and gentle temperament, she was singularly fitted to cope with the difficult position in which she was placed. Born, like

many a governess, to a better station, and reduced by a series of misfortunes that might make a romance of her life, she endured her past and present trials with uncomplaining dignity. No provocation, and her provocations were very numerous, either to herself or her pupil, ever induced her to make Mrs. Scawen a topic of conversation between them; her name was never alluded to in any way. She simply endeavoured to quiet her pupil's mind after a skirmish with her step-mother, by directing it to a subject as different as possible from the one that had just been under discussion; and so by amusing or employing her thoughts, to draw them from what was at once painful and injurious. Therefore Anne loved Miss Elder better than anybody except Hugh, but she never opened her mind to her, because there was a feeling of restraint in their relative positions, which is never wholly overcome, unless the governess allows herself to be reduced to a mere cypher.

In this way time passed without interruption, until Hugh went to sea. His father, unwilling to part with him, had suggested his loitering away a few years in the army ; but to his romantic imagination, the wearing a spangled coat in a garrison town would be but a poor substitute for the honours and perils of a naval life. So he went,—leaving nothing to console Anne's heavy heart, but a whole score of the holiday notes that had passed between them, and a bracelet, made after his own idea, with a gold cross, heart, and anchor, depending from a thick golden chain. Years after, bracelets of this pattern might be seen in every jeweller's shop in Paris, but at that period Anne had it all to herself.

Mrs. Scawen contented herself by forbidding Anne to wear it ; and she laid it up among her other treasures, to be worn, when she should go to live with Hugh at Datchley.

CHAPTER III.

Orl. And why not the swift foot of Time? had not that been as proper?

Ros. By no means, sir: Time travels in divers paces with divers persons.—*As you Like It.*

Touch. Mistress, you must come away to your father.
Ibid.

ALTHOUGH time passed heavily with Anne, yet it brought in its train a consolation of which nothing could deprive her. Very slowly, but surely, her birthdays came and went. She was twelve, she was thirteen, she was fourteen. On the 1st of January she would be fifteen, and when Hugh was twenty-one, which would be when she was nineteen years old, he would take possession of Datchley, and she would be freed from the intolerable re-

straint of her present mode of life. All the delights that a poet might ascribe to Paradise, she firmly believed to be centred in Datchley. Neither Hugh nor herself had ever seen the place; but, in talking it over, they drew on their imaginations until they made it a perfect garden of Eden. But not one word of these day-dreams did she ever breathe to Miss Elder, farther than to ask her leave to begin a set of chairs for Datchley, which she imagined would be ready about the time Hugh came of age. Miss Elder, who had unlimited control over all supplies either of books or work, readily complied; and Anne, having obtained a pattern of the scutcheons of Scawen and Lascelles, set about her labour of love. It was never brought into the drawing-room, for fear Mrs. Scawen should forbid it altogether. Anne's work-frame stood in the shadiest corner of the study, carefully covered with handkerchiefs, when she thought there was any chance of a visit from her step-mother; and her

happiest hours (except those moments of breathless and almost painful delight, when she received a letter from Hugh) were spent in working these interminable crests and scutcheons, while Miss Elder read aloud.

One morning while she was absorbed in putting the finishing stitches to a scallop-shell, derived from the Lascelles side of the house, Miss Elder suddenly paused in her reading, and remarked, that she thought she heard Mr. Scawen's voice. In fact, that gentleman might be plainly heard from the foot of the stairs, summoning his daughter to his presence.

Anne rose with a beating heart, and hurried down, wondering what grave offence Mrs. Scawen had laid to her charge, and only hoping that it involved nothing which would endanger her favourite chair-covers.

As soon as she joined her father, he beckoned her into his study; and there, leaning on the mantel-piece, he surveyed her in silence

for some moments ; while she, frightened and embarrassed by his gaze, felt the colour gradually mounting into her face.

“ What’s the matter ? what have you done ? what are you colouring for ? ” asked her father, sharply.

“ I do not know, sir,” faltered Anne, the offending colour spreading over her forehead.

“ You don’t know—that’s an evasion ; you have been doing something you are ashamed of,” retorted Mr. Scawen.

Anne did not venture to contradict this assertion ; she thought of the chair-covers, and trembled in silence.

“ I sent for you to tell you that the son of my friend, General Clavering, has just arrived,” said Mr. Scawen ; “ perhaps you knew it before.”

“ No, sir,” faltered Anne ; who was perfectly guiltless of knowing that General Clavering had a son in existence, although she remembered, some two or three years back,

a little, dry, abrupt-looking old man, with very polite manners, who ingratiated himself wonderfully with her stepmother; and who went into ecstasies about Anne's eyes and complexion, until he saw it was unpleasant to his hearer, when he transferred all the remainder of his admiration to the sole account of Mrs. Scawen.

“There's nothing on earth I abhor like gossiping with servants, and obtaining from them information of what is going on in the house!” exclaimed Mr. Scawen.

“Indeed, sir, I have heard nothing from the servants,” said Anne, with earnestness.

“Well, Mr. Clavering is to spend some weeks with us,” continued Mr. Scawen; “I desire that he may not find his stay here wearisome: it is my wish that you should show him every attention in your power.”

“If Hugh were but here!” said Anne, timidly.

“As Hugh happens to be just now at Val-

paraiso," said Mr. Scawen; "I do not see the point of your observation. It is of no use your exclaiming after Hugh, it will not bring him back, that I am aware of. Your business is to endeavour to amuse Mr. Clavering, and to supply the place of your absent brothers."

Anne felt that all her German and Italian lessons would be nothing to the task of amusing an unknown Mr. Clavering; but, summoning all her courage, she ventured to say to her father,—

"Is he a boy, if you please, sir?"

"I consider that to be a highly improper question," said Mr. Scawen, knitting his brows into an awful frown. "Mr. Clavering is my guest, and his age is of no manner of importance. Let me hear no more idle remarks. I don't know what you call a boy. I suppose that Mr. Clavering may be two years older than yourself. Follow me!"

Thus abjured, she obeyed in silence, and Mr. Scawen preceded her into the drawing-

room, where her step-mother was seated on one side of the fire, and on the other, sat a boy about seventeen years old, very small and slight in his person, with light brown hair, hard grey eyes, and a straight obstinate-looking face.

Mr. Scawen, with great ceremony, took Anne's hand, led her forward, and said to the boy,

“ Mr. Clavering, allow me to present to you my daughter, Miss Scawen.”

The boy rose and bowed, and then resumed his seat quietly without speaking a word. Anne, equally silent, went to sit by the table.

“ This is the son of my distinguished friend, General Clavering,” resumed Mr. Scawen, moving his hand towards the young gentleman, who sat immovable, bearing a strong resemblance to a large wooden doll.

Anne bowed again, and glancing towards the young gentleman, thought he was going

to burst out laughing; but he suddenly recovered his gravity, and looked more rigid than before.

Mr. Scawen then rose, mentioned that he was obliged to meet a tenant, trusted that Mr. Clavering might be amused until dinner-time, and then left the room.

Master Clavering received this speech very politely, replied in a few appropriate words, and then relapsed into the stillest silence. Anne received a sharp intimation from Mrs. Scawen that she had better take up her work, which she did very willingly. Mrs. Scawen was diligently plying her needle at a very ugly and unwieldy pair of slippers. Master Clavering's hard grey eyes, wandered from Anne to Mrs. Scawen, and thence to every article of furniture in the room.

At last, Mrs. Scawen, looking at Anne, said,

“Mr. Clavering remains with us during the Christmas holidays.”

“My governor is going to Vienna,” added Master Clavering, in a very pleasant, courteous tone.

Anne was quite puzzled: it so happened that Hugh never applied this disgusting *sobriquet* to his father,—she knew nothing of what Henry said or did. She thought Master Clavering meant that his father was going as governor to Vienna; and she imagined he must have made a mistake in the last word. Perhaps he meant Bombay or Canada.

“To *Vienna*?” she asked, timidly.

The young gentleman nodded affirmatively; and then resting his elbow on the scroll of the sofa and his chin on his hand, he fixed his eyes firmly on Anne’s very beautiful face.

A long silence.—Mrs. Scawen stitching diligently at her slipper, Anne making great progress in the embroidered corner of her cambric handkerchief.

“I say, is your name Anne?” asked Master Clavering, at last.

"Yes," replied Anne; "what is *your* Christian name?"

To her great surprise Master Clavering's singular countenance became suddenly clouded.

"Never mind!" he retorted, sullenly.

"I don't want to know particularly," said Anne. "I am sorry I asked, if you don't wish to tell."

"Well, then, — Wymond, — there!" exclaimed Master Clavering, with a praiseworthy effort.

"Oh! that is a very pretty name!" said Anne.

"Such humbug!" muttered the young gentleman. "Why didn't he call me Jack?"

"But of whom are you speaking?" asked Anne.

"Of my governor," replied the boy.

"Did you mean the Governor of Vienna?" said Anne, now quite confused.

"Well, you *are* a stupid!" exclaimed Master Clavering.

"You are a rude boy!" retorted Anne, whose spirit was up in a moment.

Master Clavering turned away and looked out of the window, humming a low, monotonous tune. Fortunately for Anne, Mrs. Scawen was so busy counting threads in her ugly slippers, that she did not notice this little altercation.

"Can you sing, Master Clavering?" asked Anne, archly, after a pause, during which he had gone on with a dreary buzz, meant to represent the air of an old ballad—the only tune he knew.

"Yes, I can, when I like," he replied.

"I hope you will sing to me, then," she said.

"*Ca dépend*," he said.

"What? you speak French?" exclaimed Anne.

"I should think I could!" replied Master Clavering.

"What school did you go to?" asked Anne.

“ Westminster ; but I have left. I am going into the—the Hussars in the spring.

“ Did you like school ? ”

“ No.”

“ Why not ? ”

“ Because there was no place where I could go and play alone.”

“ But it is so pleasant to have play-fellows,” said Anne.

“ I don’t want play-fellows—I had rather be alone,” he replied.

“ But what games do you play at alone ? ”

“ I play with tops. I have eighteen humming-tops, all of different sizes, and I make handles for them—I have a turning-lathe at home. Besides, I play with gunpowder.”

“ Ah ! that is very dangerous,” said Anne.

“ I don’t care,” returned Master Clavering, sullenly : “ but I ’ll play with *you*,” he added, clearing up hastily.

“ What shall we play at ? ” asked Anne.

“ Billiards,” said Master Clavering: “ if you don’t know how, I will teach you.”

“ I fear Anne will be a sad player at first, Mr. Clavering,” said Mrs. Scawen, rising; “ but I believe the billiard-table is pretty good. It is growing rather dark for billiards, is not it? They light the lamps there after dinner.”

“ It is too dark to begin this afternoon,” said Master Clavering, rising and crossing the room to open the door for Mrs. Scawen; “ but I hope to have the pleasure of showing Miss Scawen the game to-morrow.”

By this time Mrs. Scawen had retired; and Master Clavering, coming back to the fireplace, turned suddenly to Anne, and said,

“ I say, can you give us a plate of salt?”

Anne looked up in his face with the utmost astonishment.

“ How you do stare with your great eyes!” said the boy, not growing sulky, for a wonder.

“ But—salt, Master Clavering?” said Anne, greatly perplexed.

"Salt!" replied that young gentleman, distinctly.

"Oh! certainly," returned Anne, ringing the bell.

"A plate of salt for Mr. Clavering," she said, when the butler appeared at the door.

"Yes, ma'am: about what sized plate will Mr. Clavering require?" asked the butler, with great solemnity.

"Oh! have the goodness to send my man here," said Master Clavering.

The butler withdrew, and Master Clavering's man made his appearance. A middle-aged, decent-looking man he was, and he had need have been; for he had the entire charge of Master Clavering, who was as helpless as an infant.

"A plate of salt, Power, if you please," said that young gentleman.

He always spoke courteously to his inferiors, unless they put him out of temper.

Power withdrew in his turn, and presently entered with a soup-plate full of salt.

“There, Mr. Clavering,” said he firmly; “you may make that last; for it is all you will get, and so I tell you!”

“Is it? you stupid!” cried Master Clavering, much exasperated; “you give it here; and go and unpack my tops ready for me when I come up stairs!”

“You have got about twenty minutes, Mr. Clavering, before the dressing-bell, and so I tell you;” remarked Power, as he was leaving the room.

“Have I? I shall stay as long as I choose!” he retorted. Then setting one foot on the fender, and the plate on his knee, he kept throwing small handfuls of salt into the fire, and watching the blue flame that started up as he did so.

Anne sat contemplating his singular wooden face, fitfully illuminated by the ghastly light, and wondering whether he was not an idiot.

A boy of his age playing with humming tops, and burning salt, struck her as something like insanity, and yet the way in which he replied to her father and Mrs. Scawen, seemed as if he possessed the ordinary amount of understanding. In fact, had he been a poor man's son, he would have been at once set down as "a natural." But as General Clavering was likely to succeed to the earldom of D——, it was agreed among the young gentleman's friends to speak of him as only eccentric.

No words could depict the fondness of General Clavering for his son. He was his only child—his only object in life. He had parted from him with the greatest reluctance—but his health was precarious, the climate of Vienna in winter was said to be too severe for him, and the general accepted with eagerness Mr. Scawen's offer to take charge of him during his absence. He could not defer his own journey, for he was summoned

on particular business by the very Lord D——, whom he intended one day to replace. He viewed his son's eccentricities with uneasiness, but without attaching to them the exact meaning that other people did. In fact, Master Clavering's character was sufficiently complex to puzzle a much greater philosopher than his father. He expressed himself correctly whenever he made the effort, and went through all the usages of society like a gentleman. He read every thing that he could get hold of upon politics, and seemed to understand what he read. He played chess admirably, and possessed a hard shrewdness that would prevent his being much pillaged in the world. But his manner *gave way*, if the term may be used, the moment that he felt at all familiar with a person, and he showed every shade of temper that passed through his mind as plainly as a child of five years old. He was very nervous and fidgetty, and almost wore out his servant, who was, however, at-

tached to him, and who had been in the general's service a great many years. He was very domestic, as his father called it; that is, he was averse to going to parties, and preferred sitting by the fireside carving toys with a penknife out of a bit of wood, and chanting his single old ballad. He was not very fond of women's society, but he endured them better than young men or boys, of whose company he had a perfect horror, probably because they had not led him a very easy life when he was at school. However, he took a decided fancy to Anne; sometimes appearing to consider her as a school-fellow, and sometimes recollecting that she was a girl, and staring at her large eyes with a kind of hard admiration. But at this stage of their acquaintance, both sat perfectly silent—the salt began to wax low, and the dressing-bell rang.

Anne rose to go; upon which he looked up and said,—

“ Oh ! you stay, there 's a good fellow ! ”

This singular address had the effect of making Anne resume her seat.

“ Now then, Mr. Clavering ! ” said Power, putting his head in at the door.

“ Well, what 's the matter ? ” returned Master Clavering, keeping his eyes fixed on the fire.

“ Time to dress, sir ; the bell rang five minutes ago.

“ No hurry,” said Master Clavering, throwing another pinch of salt into the fire.

“ Come, sir ! ” urged Power.

“ I tell you there 's time enough ! ” said the young gentleman, doggedly.

“ Come, Mr. Clavering,” said Power, persuasively ; “ you always take such a time to dress.”

“ I shall come when I like ! ” returned Master Clavering, looking still more obstinate.

“ If you don't come directly, I won't dress

you, Mr. Clavering, and so I tell you!" replied Power, now driven to the last extremity.

At this declaration of war, Master Clavering rose sulkily, gave the soup-plate into the hands of his servant, and walked out of the room.

Anne saw no more of him until she made her appearance in the drawing-room with Miss Elder, just before tea. He was then sitting near Mrs. Scawen, surveying with the most intense appearance of interest the progress of her slipper. He came directly to Anne, pushed a chair towards her, and said with a very threatening aspect—

"Where have you been, all this time?"

"I have been in the study—I am not out yet. I dine early," said Anne.

"Oh! I shall dine with you, to-morrow," said Master Clavering.

"Papa will not let you," said Anne.

Master Clavering did not seem quite able to

comprehend this, for with the exception of Power, and a little lively opposition sometimes from the boys at Westminster, he had done pretty much as he liked, all his life. Presently he said, as if a sudden thought had struck him,—

“ Let ’s have a game of chess together.

“ I may not,” said Anne; “ Mrs. Scawen does not like me to play chess. When Hugh was at home ”—

“ Who is Hugh ? ” interrupted Master Clavering.

“ My brother—he ’s in the navy. His ship is now on the South America station.”

“ What ship ? ” asked Master Clavering.

“ The Amaranth,” said Anne.

“ Captain Lascelles, aint it ? ” inquired Master Clavering.

This choice piece of English was responded to in the affirmative by Anne.

“ Oh ! I know him,” replied Master Clavering.

“ Know him !—Hugh’s captain ! ” exclaimed

Anne, with such a flash of her dark hazel eyes, that Master Clavering actually started. "Tell me all about him!"

This request made the young gentleman look very pensive, but after a little hesitation he began—

"Why one day my governor brought home a man to dinner, and told me his name was Lascelles."

Anne, thinking she was going to hear something, was all attention.

"Well," she said.

"That's all," replied her companion.

"Oh! but—was he pleasant?" she asked.

"Of course," said Master Clavering.

"Can't you tell me some more?" asked Anne.

"After dinner we all went to the opera —"

"Yes—well—"

"Oh! then we had some supper."

"Yes—but—"

"Oh! then it was too late to go any

where else—we went to bed, and so did he, I dare say.”

Anne, who saw that she could not expect a sketch of Captain Lascelles, sighed and was silent.

“ I’ll tell you what the ballet was,” added Master Clavering, after a pause.

Anne did not care to hear about the ballet. ‘ La Giselle ;’ “ but I think you are prettier than Cerito.”

“ Nonsense !” said Anne.

“ Did you ever see Cerito ? ”

“ No.”

“ Well, then, how can you judge ? ”

Mr. Clavering, perhaps you might like to try a game of chess with Miss Scawen ? ” said Mr. Scawen.

“ There ! ” exclaimed Master Clavering, turning to Anne ; “ it would give me the greatest pleasure,” said he, beginning to arrange the table which Mr. Scawen drew towards him.

Anne's heart swelled : she, who had been forbidden to play chess *with Hugh*, to play for the amusement of the first stranger that came to the house !—All her wrongs seemed to rise before her.—The passion that shook her breast, made even the hand tremble with which she was arranging the pieces.

“ Come, I 'll let you begin,” said Master Clavering.

“ Don't ask me ! I can't play ! It makes me miserable ! ” said Anne, shuddering as she looked on the board.

“ Well, if it makes you miserable, it won't do,” said Master Clavering, slowly taking off the pieces, and putting them into the drawer ; we will think of something else. Suppose I teach you *écarté*.”

CHAPTER IV.

Ma. I'll be hanged first,
But you must have your way.

Al. And so will you too,
Or break down hedges for it.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

“THERE'S a knock at *our* door!” exclaimed Anne, as Miss Elder was about to pour out the tea the next morning.

Miss Elder looked surprised, for *their* door was very seldom molested. She desired the person to come in; and Mr. Clavering made his appearance, bowed easily, and drawing a chair to the table, said to Miss Elder, in his most courteous tone, “I hope you will allow me to join your party; I like breakfasting early.”

"With pleasure," said Miss Elder; "I will ring and let Mrs. Scawen know that she need not expect you in the breakfast-room."

This was a very necessary move on Miss Elder's part, to prove to Mrs. Scawen that she had not cajoled Master Clavering into the study; but it did not seem exactly to meet that gentleman's views, for he sprang up suddenly, and interposing between Miss Elder's hand and the bell, said angrily—

"What, you would, would you?"

"Sit down, Master Clavering," said Anne, laughing: "we don't mean to turn you out; but Mrs. Scawen won't know what has become of you if we don't send her word."

Miss Elder, who had begun to look a little frightened, was relieved by seeing him take the chair Anne pointed out; and delivered her message without interruption.

"But you will like something more than we can offer you here," said Miss Elder.

"Nothing, whatever," said Master Claver-

ing; "I never take any thing for breakfast but dry toast."

"And we have some honey!" said Anne, lifting off the top of a Wedgewood beehive.

"Don't make yourself sick, then," said Master Clavering, directing a wooden glance towards the honey-comb.

"Is not he odd?" exclaimed Anne.

"My dear!" said Miss Elder, mildly.

"He's only a boy," said Anne; "I was afraid he was a man when papa called me down yesterday."

"I shall be eighteen the first of January," said Master Clavering, colouring with anger; "and the governor is promised my commission in the spring."

"Why, my birthday is on the first of January," exclaimed Anne; "Miss Elder, I don't think I shall let him have the same day that I have. You shall have the second, Master Clavering."

"Yes, see if you can hinder it!" retorted Master Clavering, now very red.

"He's getting into a passion!" said Anne.

"See if I ever tell you any thing about Lascelles!" cried Master Clavering.

"You cannot—that is the best of it," said Anne laughingly; "do you know Miss Elder, he has not the least idea how to describe a person. Now, I could describe Henry or Hugh exactly, if I tried. Couldn't *you*."

"But, my dear Anne, this is not quite well bred, to laugh at your guest" — remonstrated Miss Elder.

"I will not," said Anne; "if he will leave off looking so sulky."

There appeared to be a slight struggle in Master Clavering's mind as to whether he would comply with this request, but after a short pause he cleared up suddenly, and said to Anne,—

"How old will you be on the first of January?"

"Fifteen," said Anne.

"Ah! then you will do very well," remarked Master Clavering.

Anne was at a loss to interpret this speech! Miss Elder smiled a little; and Master Clavering, seeing that breakfast was over, said to her pleasantly—

"Shall I ring?"

"Now, Master Clavering, I am going to my lessons," said Anne, "bringing a heap of books to the table.

"No!" he returned, clearing them out of the way with his elbow; "I'll tell you what we'll do—we will go and play at peg-top."

"Not just now, Mr. Clavering," said Miss Elder, in great perplexity.

"Yes, we will," retorted Master Clavering, "Mr. Scawen said yesterday that his daughter should—that his daughter might,—Oh! some humbug that meant,—she was to play with me."

Mr. Scawen had said the same thing to Miss Elder, too, and she did not know how to decide—he had not stated how far she was to go, and really when Anne had not been allowed to run in the park with her own brother, it seemed odd to suffer her to play at pegtop with a stranger.

Master Clavering terminated his argument by drawing a good sized pegtop from his pocket, together with a string tied to a button; and began to wind it carefully up.

“Now you mind what I tell you,” said Master Clavering, standing with a threatening aspect before Anne’s chair, “you hold the top *so*—and the string *so*—and throw it in this way, or you won’t make it spin!”

As he spoke he launched the top into the middle of the room. It spun about feebly on the thick carpet, and then fell sleepily down.

“This won’t do, you know,” exclaimed Master Clavering, looking vindictive; “let us come down into the wood-yard!”

Anne had never set foot in the offices during her life. She hesitated ; but there seemed to be no appeal from the authority of Master Clavering. Miss Elder wrapped a shawl round her—for it was a cold November morning,—and she followed her new play-fellow.

Master Clavering had noticed from his window that the wood-yard was paved with flagstones, and therefore very fit for his present purpose. It was very large ; but there was a dirty-looking boy sifting cinders at one end, and two men stacking billets of wood at the other ; the servants crossing to the offices from door to door ; a sound of quarrelling from a pantry-window,—of singing, from the laundry,—and of scuffling generally diffused through the neighbourhood, that rather annoyed Anne. She felt out of her place.

“ I won’t play here ! ” said she, decidedly.

“ You will not ? ” exclaimed Master Clavering, angrily.

“ No. I will play where I like, and at

what I please ; and you need not clench your hand, for if you do not obey me in everything, I will never speak to you again. Hugh did everything I liked. If boys are to be masters, things are very different from what they used to be, and I had rather die at once than submit to it."

"I suppose you want to be master yourself?" said Master Clavering, half laughing.

"I do, I tell you fairly. Now, if you agree to it, come on the terrace, and play there."

"Well, shake hands upon it," said Master Clavering:—which she did.

It was not very amusing playing at peg-top. Anne could not succeed in making it spin, and Master Clavering grew very angry ; but she became so indignant at any show of displeasure on his part, that he found it his interest to try and command his temper,—an exercise that possessed for him at present all the charm of novelty.

Suddenly Master Clavering, who was in the act of winding up his top for the fiftieth time, flung it down, and exclaimed,—

“Run, run ! here comes Power,—this way ; make haste ; come along !”

Anne did not know why the sight of Power should make them run away ; but she followed as fast as she could to the bottom of the terrace, down the steps into the flower-garden, across another terrace, down a grassy slope, headlong to the fish-ponds. There, crouching down behind the trunk of an old quince-tree, Master Clavering remarked,—

“What a bore that the leaves are all off the trees ! I should not wonder if he saw me. Which way is he coming ?”

“He has gone back to the house,” said Anne.

“Oh ! that’s all right.”

“Why ?”

“Because he came after me to remind me to write to my governor.”

“But, if you ought to write, let us go back to the house at once.”

“I dare say. Let him write himself. We will take a walk in the park until dinner. You know that I dine with you,”

“Do you really?”

“Didn't you hear me say so?”

“Yes; but I did not know whether papa had given you leave.”

“Do you suppose I wait for leave to do what I wish?”

“I know that you ought to do so,” replied Anne.

Master Clavering looked at her with a very rigid countenance, and replied,—

“If my governor was to talk about leave to me, I would cut him.”

“And then, who would give you food and clothes, you silly boy?” exclaimed Anne, laughing. “Why, nobody; you would starve, or you would go to the workhouse, and then you would have to pick hemp, or whatever

they call that woolly stuff, and wear the pauper dress besides ; and then, how handsome you would look !”

“ Don’t !” cried Master Clavering, choking with rage.

“ So that you would very soon be glad to come back again to the governor of Vienna,” said Anne, laughing still more.

“ Don’t !” shouted Master Clavering, clenching his hands, and perfectly crimson with anger.

“ Do you speak to me in that tone ?” cried Anne, drawing herself up. “ I will not suffer it. You shall not get out of temper. Hugh let me laugh at him ; and, if you clench your hand again, take care, for I will have you thrown into the fish-pond.”

“ Well, I won’t,” said Master Clavering, sullenly. “ Only I wish you would not always be talking of Hugh. Who is Hugh ? I suppose you think him a mighty fine fellow ?”

"Yes, I do," said Anne, — "the finest fellow in the world; and I shall always talk of him, for I think of him all day and every-day; and when we go to live at Datchley I shall not let you come to see us."

"Datchley!" echoed Master Clavering, in a contemptuous tone, — "and when are you going to live there?"

"When Hugh comes of age."

"Oh! you will be married before that time."

"Do you dare to say so? I shall never marry. Hugh and I always mean to live together."

"Ah!" said Master Clavering, with his most wooden expression of countenance, "time will show!"

"I know how it is," exclaimed Anne, who was excessively aggravated that anybody for a moment should combat her chosen project. "You are envious of Hugh."

"What should I envy him for?" he asked, sullenly.

“Because he is a sailor, and has fought for his country, which is more than you have done; though he is a year younger than you are. He has several times been engaged with pirates, and Captain Lascelles mentioned him in the dispatches, besides writing to papa to compliment him on Hugh’s conduct.”

“Very fine,” said Master Clavering.

“I see you are ready to cry,” retorted Anne, “when you think you have never drawn your sword, and never will, if you mean to go poking into the army, while Hugh was the first to board a Spanish vessel, and shot down the captain of the pirates the moment he put his foot on the deck. What do you think of that? Is not that better than going maundering about the country, pretending to be a soldier? Hugh would not be a soldier, for papa asked him.”

“I am sure I would not be a sailor!” exclaimed Master Clavering.

“No; you would be afraid. The first time the wind blew you would ask them to put you on shore again, and Hugh would call you a lubber.”

“If he did, I would pretty soon call him out,” retorted Master Clavering; “so he had better mind what he was about.”

“Then Hugh would shoot you, as he did the pirate captain,” said Anne.

“What do girls know about shooting?” said Master Clavering.

“I used to shoot with a bow and arrow,” returned Anne.

“That has nothing to do with fighting a duel,” said Master Clavering.

“Don’t contradict me!” cried Anne. “You said I was to be master, and if you don’t keep to it, you shall walk by yourself.”

After a little grumbling, Master Clavering subsided into the tune of the old ballad, which was a tacit agreement on his part, that he withdrew his opposition for the present.

In a little while he stopped, and put his hand to his heart.

"I have a pain here," he said.

"Oh! I am sorry for that, let us go in," said Anne.

"Well, if we go to your study, I will," he replied. "I don't want to go into the drawing-room."

"Oh! stop a minute; I can't go on," he said presently; "it is intolerable;—that brute Power! I should not have run but for him."

"Let me call somebody," said Anne, frightened to see him turn white, then almost blue.

"No, it is going, it is better," replied Master Clavering; "let us come in, I shall have it boring me all day though; and all owing to that fool!"

"I wish I could do anything for you," said Anne.

"Oh! you are a good fellow," said Master Clavering, "but you cannot; it will kill me

some day, this will, you know (pointing to his heart). I say, we will play at billiards after dinner."

"Do you never do any lessons?" asked Anne.

"I? *pas si bête!* I have not left school to do lessons!"

"How did you learn French?" asked Anne.

"I have been to Paris two or three times with my governor: you should see Power in Paris—he hates the French so, you can't think."

"Here we are, Miss Elder," said Anne.

"Master Clavering has been ill, so I have brought him back again."

"I hope it is nothing of any consequence," said Miss Elder, smiling.

"Not at all," replied Master Clavering.

"Why, I do believe there's my fellow knocking at the door."

"I beg your pardon, Ma'am," said Power, looking in, "I am sorry to disturb you, but

perhaps you will allow me to come in for a moment, as I have to speak with Mr. Clavering."

"Pray do," said Miss Elder.

Master Clavering fixed his eyes resolutely on the table before him.

"Now, Mr. Clavering," said Power, producing a pen and a sheet of paper, "you will be so good as to write a letter to the general; and if you make haste, perhaps it will be in time for to-day's post."

"Where's the ink?" said Master Clavering, sulkily.

There was an inkstand on the table, and Power drew it just in front of his master, and then waited the result.

"You may write it yourself," said Master Clavering, after contemplating the paper with intense dislike. "I am sure you know what to say!"

"No, Mr. Clavering," returned Power, "the general desired to have a few lines from your

hand, to tell him how you were ; and you will be so good as to say that you arrived safely last night—that you were rather feverish in the evening, but that to-day you are quite well.”

“ I am not ! ” cried Master Clavering, rejecting the pen that Power offered to him, “ I have a pain in my chest, entirely owing to you—running after me.”

“ You ran away from me, Mr. Clavering,” said Power, forcing the pen into his master’s hand ; “ you had better put that in your letter.”

Master Clavering drew the paper towards him, and began, not to write, but to draw absurd figures all over it, such as little children draw, with large heads, and hands, like a bundle of matches.

“ Well, sir, we must have another sheet,” said Power, drawing one from the portfolio he carried, as soon as Master Clavering had quite spoiled the one before him.

"Is 'nt he provoking?" said Anne, in a low voice to Miss Elder.

"Hush, my dear!" she replied.

"What's that you say?" asked Master Clavering, looking up.

"I said you were a tiresome boy," returned Anne.

"I can't write, I have such a pain in my chest," said Master Clavering.

"You always have, sir, when you don't want to do anything," remarked Power.

"Oh! Master Clavering!" said Anne.

"He is a great idiot!" exclaimed Master Clavering; "it's false; I wish he had half the pain I have. And now I won't write at all."

And resting his head on the table, he began to sooth himself with the tune of his old ballad.

"Would any one think, ladies," said Power, looking round him with a persecuted air, "that Mr. Clavering is going on for eighteen years old!"

"I can't believe it," said Anne.

"I tell you what, Power," said Master Clavering, after a pause, that biggest humming-top of mine is cracked.

"Very likely, sir," said Power.

"As it wont hum, I must have another; do you drive over to P—, and buy me one like it, it must be quite as large; and if you can get me one larger, bring that too."

"If you will write your letter, sir, I'll see about it," said Power.

"Who cracked it," said Mr. Clavering, dipping his pen, "we wont inquire; I rather think it was you; but if you won't pack them in tow, we must expect them sometimes to split when they are jolted together."

"One trunk, ladies, is crammed quite full of those tops," remarked Power, with a look of resignation. "It was lost at the Manchester station, and I did hope we had heard the last of it; but it seems they are very honest on the railways, and it turned up again."

After relating this with a sigh of regret at the moral rectitude of the railway people, Power walked gravely to the mantel-piece and lit a taper for sealing.

Master Clavering at the same time completed his epistle, which was pretty legible, and not remarkable for anything, except that every line began with a capital letter, as if it was blank verse, a habit which he always persisted in, and even defended, by some strange perversion of ideas.

CHAPTER V.

Kath. I see a woman may be made a fool
If she has not a spirit to resist.

SHAKESPEARE.

It took some time for Anne to convince Master Clavering exactly of the line of conduct she meant him to pursue.

It was so new for him to yield his own wishes to other people,—it was so strange not to speak loud when he was angry,—it was so troublesome to clear up his countenance when he was sullen,—that he was for several days in a state of complete bewilderment, and only obeyed his new companion because it was easier to do so than to think over the subject and decide on a system of rebellion.

For Anne, sitting quiet and reserved in the drawing-room, hardly raising her large, timid eyes, was a very different person from Anne in the study, ruling over Master Clavering.

But in spite of their occasional differences, he became so attached to her society, that he spent all his time in her school-room, taking his meals with her and Miss Elder, and appearing with them in the drawing-room only of an evening. He offered no opposition to Anne's reading and working in the morning; and while she was pursuing her studies, he would sit by the fire with a pen-knife and a strip of wood, out of which he carved some absurd toy or other.

The weather set in about this time very wet and dull, as it often does in December. Anne, who was chilly and susceptible to gloomy skies, was not quite in her usual spirits; but Master Clavering seemed to feel himself very much injured. He sat closer

than ever to the fire, and never took his eyes off the piece of wood, which he was shaving into some distant resemblance to an ape, and which in time was to show its dexterity by throwing itself head-foremost over a little horizontal pole. But one gloomy morning, when the leaden sky seemed scarcely higher than the house-top, and the sullen rain fell cold and steadily, and everything felt damp in spite of the blazing fires, Master Clavering came in to breakfast, looking more dull and cross than usual, with his pocket-handkerchief full of the scraps of wood and pack-thread with which he amused himself. As he was like a great many other people, a huge demander of sympathy, however little of that commodity he might be in the habit of bestowing upon his neighbours, his feelings were very much disturbed by the sight of Anne standing by the window with a letter in her hand, her whole countenance radiant with joy. It was from Hugh. With trem-

bling hands and sparkling eyes, she was devouring every line. It was too much to expect that she should see Master Clavering, though he stood sulkily at a little distance, watching her and expecting to be spoken to. When the door opened, she thought it was the servant bringing in the rolls, and went on eagerly with her reading. At last she came to the signature, kissed it, folded up the letter, and put it in the pocket of her apron.

“Hugh sends his love to you, Miss Elder,” she said, moving to the table,—“Oh! here is Master Clavering; good morning to you!”

“Hugh is always very kind in remembering me,” said Miss Elder.

“And how are you, Master Clavering? I suppose you have a pain in your chest, as this is your day for writing to Vienna.”

“I suppose I have,” said Master Clavering, who had acknowledged her first address by a very sullen bend of his wooden head; “and

if this weather gave you such a pain in the chest as it does me, we should see how much *you* would write."

"The weather?" said Anne, looking up with a sunny smile, "Oh, yes; it's raining fast."

"It pleases you, apparently," said Master Clavering.

"Everything pleases me to-day," said Anne.

Master Clavering pushed away his plate, and went to sit by the chimney-corner, where he consoled himself by working hard at his toy and chanting his old ballad.

"Good gracious, Miss Elder, listen to him!" cried Anne; "there are some words to his song! Pray go on, Master Clavering."

Master Clavering, who was moaning in the most dismal manner possible a legend beginning,

"St. Thomas is dead and laid in his grave,
Heigh ho! laid in his grave!"

stopped directly, and casting a sullen glance towards the table, muttered,—

“Never mind what comes next! I’m not going to sing any more while this kind of weather lasts. It is enough to make a man hang himself.”

“I am very sorry if you are really in pain,” said Anne, seeing him hold his hand to his heart: “you shall have your own way till you are better.”

“Well, I like you to be sorry for me,” said Master Clavering. “My governor does bore me so when anything is the matter with me: he rings the bell, and sends off for the doctor, and fidgets about, walking up and down the room. Oh! it would drive you mad to see my governor walk up and down the room, backwards and forwards, till my head spins round. And I don’t see what there is in me to make such a bother about. It is only because he has no other children, and he is always thinking of that stupid old earldom.”

“ You ungrateful creature ! ” cried Anne ;
“ you don’t deserve to have any father at all
—I never heard of such a wicked boy.”

This rebuff naturally sent Master Clavering back to his history of St. Thomas, which he chanted as if he were presiding at that saint’s funeral.

Anne was sitting in the window-seat, working hard at one of her chair-covers.

Presently Master Clavering came shyly up to her, and fidgetted about without speaking.

“ Do you wish to sit here ? ” asked Anne, moving her basket of wool from the seat.

He nodded, and placed himself beside her.

“ Go on singing,” said Anne, “ I work so fast to that tune ; I take a stitch to every note, and thread my needle to that little groan at the end.”

“ What are you making ? ” asked Master Clavering.

“ A chair,” said Anne ; “ I shall want some more scarlet wound presently.”

“ Is it for yourself ! ”

“ No, for Hugh ; I am working him a set for the drawing-room at Datchley ; six common chairs, two arm-chairs, and two *prie-dieu* chairs. That is a great undertaking, is it not ? ”

Master Clavering's only reply was to kick down the basket of German wool.

“ Well, if you like the trouble of picking up all those skeins, it is very well,” said Anne, glancing coolly over the top of her frame ; “ nobody else will do it.”

“ I am sure *I* wont,” said Master Clavering, sulkily.

“ Then this is the very last hour you ever spend in the study,” returned Anne ; “ I have only to ring for your servant, and tell him you are troublesome, and you know he will take you down stairs.”

“ Don't ! ” cried Master Clavering, peevishly.

“ Very well ; I give you half a minute,” said Anne, pointing to the scattered wool.

Upon which, Master Clavering dropped suddenly down on the floor, and began to collect the skeins slowly together.

“ And now I’ve done it, I suppose you mean to be friends,” said Master Clavering, rising from his knees.

“ Yes ; if you promise never to do so again,” replied Anne.

“ Then don’t you speak of that fellow Hugh,” urged Master Clavering.

“ Not speak of Hugh ! ” exclaimed Anne. “ Miss Elder, do listen to him ? He wants me not to talk of Hugh ! Why his old straw hat, which hangs up in the hall, is better than all the people in the world, and you among the number.”

Miss Elder could not help smiling, as she recalled the lines in *Cymbeline*,—

“ His meanest garment
That ever hath but clipt his body, is dearer,
In my esteem, than all the hairs upon thee,
Were they all made such men ! ”

This passage, however, did not occur to

Master Clavering, who, after keeping a sullen silence for some time, exclaimed,

“ Only let him come in my way, that’s all ! ”

“ Take care you don’t come in *his* way,” retorted Anne. “ I would not advise you to offend him. Hugh is very quiet, but if you provoke him, p-r-r-r——.”

What particular threat she meant to convey in the singular noise with which she concluded, is not known. Master Clavering became still more sulky, and sat contemplating Anne’s gorgeous carpet-work with a revengeful expression.

“ I know what you mean by looking in that manner at my chair,” said Anne, “ you would like to destroy it ; but if you do, I will have you put into prison ; and I will work something ten times more beautiful for Hugh as soon as you are gone.”

“ Will you ? ” retorted Master Clavering.

“ Depend upon it ! ” said Anne.

This was a very serious quarrel. Anne said no more, but sat working very diligently, and thinking of Hugh. Master Clavering was too sulky even to go on carving his ape; he remained leaning in the other corner of the window-seat. At last he said,

“Come, I did not intend to quarrel when I came to sit by you, it was all your doing, I had something quite different to say.”

“Say it, then,” replied Anne.

“Do you make it up?” he asked.

“Yes; oh, dear me! it is so fatiguing making up; yes, yes!” said Anne, impatiently.

“Well, then, will you write to my governor, instead of me, this once? I do so hate writing.”

“No wonder you look so shy,” said Anne, “considering that you have hands of your own: although they are little ugly, crooked ones, they were given you to write with; and I promise you that if I undertook your letter,

I should just tell the governor of Vienna what a perverse tiresome boy you are."

"I don't care what you tell him, so long as you write the letter instead of me," replied Master Clavering.

"Can't you understand that your father would like better to see your hand-writing than mine?" said Anne.

"Who cares what he likes?" muttered Master Clavering.

"Now, once for all, you shall not speak in that manner of your father!" exclaimed Anne; "he is a thousand times too good for you!"

This reproof might possibly have brought on another quarrel, but that a message came at that moment from Mrs. Scawen, begging to speak to Miss Elder.

"I hope," said Anne, looking frightened; "I hope it is nothing about me!"

"What if it were?" inquired Master Clavering.

" I do so hate to be scolded," said Anne.

" What have you been doing, then?" he asked.

" Nothing; but Mrs. Scawen often scolds me for nothing," replied Anne, despondingly.

" What a woman she is," remarked Master Clavering; " my governor told me she was a fine woman. I pity him if that is his taste. Why, her teeth are like an elephant's."

" An elephant has no teeth," said Anne.

" Has not he?" replied Master Clavering. " Now I am going to ring for my humming-tops."

The bell was rung, and Power brought in two or three tops.

" Well, that may do for the present," said Master Clavering. " Where is the string of the largest one?—I do believe you take the strings of my tops when you want to tie up anything."

" No, sir, I don't," said Power, quietly; " and when you have done spinning your tops,

you will have the goodness to get your letter forward to go by to-morrow's post. You cannot send a letter with three lines in it, all the way to Vienna, you know."

Master Clavering made no answer. He was leaning down with his ear against the floor, to listen to the humming of his large top. Power cast a desponding look at him, and left the room.

"Well, Miss Elder," said Anne, eagerly, as her governess returned, "I hope there is nothing against me."

"No, on the contrary, my dear, I think you will be very much pleased with my tidings."

"What! is Hugh coming home?" exclaimed Anne, clasping her hands.

"Not quite that," said Miss Elder, smiling; "but Mr. and Mrs. Scawen have been invited to pass the Christmas holidays with Mrs. Morton, Mrs. Scawen's sister-in-law; and as they wish to pay another visit farther north, they

intend leaving you and Mr. Clavering with Mrs. Morton while they go on to Lord K—'s."

Anne drew a long breath. The idea of finding herself, for the first time, beyond the limits of King's Cope; the freedom of being removed from the envious eyes of Mrs. Scawen, even for a few days, almost deprived her of words. To have found herself suddenly invested with a pair of wings, would hardly have given her a more boundless sense of freedom.

"Oh! Miss Elder!" was all she could say.

"I hope you will enjoy yourself very much," said Miss Elder, kindly. "Mrs. Morton writes that her house will be full of young people."

"How delightful!" exclaimed Anne. "Fancy, Miss Elder, —perhaps dancing, or tableaux, or riding parties; good gracious! Where does Mrs. Morton live?—what day do we set out?—have you ever seen her?—is she at all like (with a sudden sinking of her

voice and countenance),—at all like Mrs. Scawen ? ”

“ Where shall I begin ? ” said Miss Elder, laughing. “ With Mrs. Morton ? She lives at Parkindale, about forty miles on this side of Edinburgh ; and though I have not seen her, I should hardly suppose her to be like Mrs. Scawen, since they are not related in the slightest degree, although they married two brothers.”

“ And when do we go ? ” pursued Anne, eagerly.

“ Mr. Scawen thought of setting out on Thursday week,” replied Miss Elder.

“ Ten days to wait ! ” said Anne ; “ never mind ; the time will come ; it *must* pass, you know, Miss Elder, though it does seem long ; does it not, Master Clavering ? ”

“ O, yes, I dare say ! ” exclaimed Master Clavering, who had hitherto preserved a dogged silence ; “ catch me going off to Scotland ! Mrs. Morton may be hanged, and her house

full of company. I like better to stay here. I never was in Scotland; they are a set of brutes, I dare say."

Anne, who had started back with a look of defiance at the beginning of this address, could now hardly keep her countenance.

"You ignorant creature, do you know where Scotland is," she cried; "I dare say you think it is in the South Seas! but you *will* go, whether you like it or not, for papa will not leave you behind."

"See if I do!" retorted Master Clavering; "I had rather be turned into a kennel of hounds, than a house full of young people. I know what they are, thank you."

"He is shy!" exclaimed Anne. "But if you are very good," she added, turning to Master Clavering with a mocking air of patronage, "I will take care of you."

"No, I am not shy," he replied; "but I won't go. I don't want a parcel of young fellows to be turning your head with their

nonsense and flirting. It is quite enough to be bothered with hearing about Hugh all day long, and having him set up as a paragon that nobody can imitate."

Anne threw a look of contempt over her shoulder at Master Clavering, and then turning to Miss Elder with a puzzled expression, said,—

"I always wonder what that means, *flirting*."

"It is not very easily defined," said her governess; "I think it means trying to attract."

"And is that wrong?" asked Anne.

"It is reversing the order of things, my dear," said Miss Elder, a little puzzled at having to discuss a subject better not approached with very young girls; "women should wait to be won, and not seek to win."

"And now you know all about flirting, which I hope you will remember," said Master

Clavering, with a very obstinate look; "you will just make up your mind to stay at home with me. I hate the Scotch, they are a set of thieves."

"He is afraid they will steal his humming-tops!" cried Anne, with a merry peal of laughter. "Oh! Miss Elder did you ever see such a boy! But if you don't take care Master Clavering, *I* will steal them, and give them to Sophy to light the fire!"

Master Clavering grasped his large top in both hands, and sat looking stubbornly at Anne. She went back to her work-frame, saying as she sorted the wools—

"If you utter one syllable down stairs against our going to Parkindale, you will find it the worst day's work you ever did! Such a bonfire as I will have of your tops down in the wood-yard, has not been seen for many a good fifth of November."

There was a long silence. The rain streamed down the window-frames—the leafless trees

rocked and moaned with the wind — everything looked very dreary out of doors, and just then people did not seem very cordial within.

Master Clavering still holding fast his large top, amused himself by singing his old ballad. Anne, looking ironical, beat time to it with her foot. This was provoking enough, but when in the intervals of her work she drew from her apron-pocket Hugh's precious letter, and refreshed herself by reading a few lines, his displeasure was manifested by a low grumbling noise, which exceedingly amused his companion. He remained obstinately in this frame of mind until the tea-things came in, and then he made a slight concession by laying his top on the sofa, and drawing his chair close to Anne's place at the table.

She took no notice of him, but turning to Miss Elder, began to discuss the important subject of her toilet ; the dresses she had, and the dresses she ought to have, to appear properly at Parkindale.

This topic exasperated Master Clavering still more, because it confirmed him in the idea that Anne would attract attention at Mrs. Morton's, and would have less time at her disposal to devote to him. And his extreme jealousy was not the least remarkable feature of his singular intimacy with her. But after a time, finding that he was quite left out of the conversation, he thought fit to recall himself to her recollection by saying angrily,—

“ I want some more sugar.”

“ Did you speak ?” said Anne, looking round.

Master Clavering did not dare to repeat the same form of words—he amended it by saying, in a more subdued tone,—

“ My tea is not sweet.”

Anne placed the sugar-basin directly before him.

“ Take it—I am sure you want sweetening,” she said, archly.

His wooden face began to unbend a little ;

and to her great surprise, while she and Miss Elder were collecting their work previous to going into the drawing-room, he exclaimed, suddenly,—

“ Well, I suppose, you must have your way about Scotland.”

“ Of course,” said Anne.

“ *Grand bien te fasse!* but I ’ll go,” said he; “ so now, I suppose, you will let me carry your basket.”

Anne, who, with all her apparent indifference, had been really uneasy lest his opposition should alter her father’s plans, offered him her basket with a smile, and even consented to shake hands at the foot of the stairs—a ceremony with which he invariably concluded their skirmishes.

CHAPTER VI.

Ros. Well, this is the forest of Arden.

Touch. Ay, now am I in Arden: the more fool I: when I was at home I was in a better place; but travellers must be content.

As You Like It.

HAD it been possible for any circumstances quite to spoil the pleasure Anne had promised herself in her journey, the crooked tempers of her travelling companions would have effectually rendered her miserable. But it was the first time she had ever been ten miles from Scawen Park, and at fifteen the spirits are not so easily depressed as when they have been exhausted by the varied shocks that years are pretty sure to bring in their train.

Mr. Scawen was always cross upon a journey. Whenever there was any room to scold he was irritable : at other times merely sulky. Mrs. Scawen, not daring to retort upon him, naturally snapt at every thing that Anne said or looked ; and Master Clavering not being altogether comfortable, kept up a low moan, through which Anne could detect the inflexions of his favourite tune.

But every turn in the road, every variation of the scenery, caused Anne's countenance to beam with delight ; and when at length the blue undulations of the Scottish hills became visible, she could not restrain the exclamation of "Scotland !" which fell from her parted lips without her knowledge.

"Yes—Scotland," said Mrs. Scawen, bitterly ; "since we set out with the intention of going thither, I see nothing surprising in the fact."

"What is she saying?" asked Mr. Scawen.

She seems to have discovered by this time that we were going to Scotland," replied Mrs. Scawen, who had the merit of seldom repeating a thing exactly as she heard it.

"What nonsense!" exclaimed Mr. Scawen, impatiently; "she would do wisely to hold her tongue, unless she can find something to say better worth hearing."

Master Clavering's sense of justice revolted at this dialogue, and looking fixedly at Anne's troubled countenance, he said, in a low voice—

"Never mind, we *are* in Scotland; and when we were at home," unconsciously quoting Touchstone's ejaculation, 'we were in a better place.'"

"Oh! look at the hills, Master Clavering!" exclaimed Anne, eagerly, "are they not beautiful? How often in reading 'The Black Dwarf,' I have longed to cross the Border! I never believed that I should. Did you ever read 'The Black Dwarf?'"

"Not I," he replied; "what is it about?"

Anne, glad of a listener to whom she could speak on the subject of her thoughts, began to give him an outline of the story, which was not finished when they stopped to dine. It was decreed that they should not go any farther that day, and after dinner Mr. Scawen being supposed asleep, and Mrs. Scawen at the table reading, Master Clavering prevailed upon Anne to draw her chair to the fire and go on with the story.

“ You left off where Hobbie’s greyhound kills Elshender’s goat,” he said, resting his chin on his hand, and fixing his hard eyes as usual upon her face ; “ I want to know what the ‘ Dwarf ’ did.”

Anne took up her narrative, and went on in a low tone, repeating scene after scene nearly in the words of the original.

“ I like that,” said Master Clavering, approvingly, when she described Isabel’s visit to the hut of the solitary—“ she was a bold woman.”

“No—not bold—that means something disagreeable,” said Anne.

“You would have been afraid, I suppose,” said Master Clavering.

“Not if it were to serve any one I loved—Hugh, for instance,” replied Anne.

Mrs. Scawen laid down her book. Mr. Scawen sat upright in his chair. They both waited, prepared to find fault; roused like mastiffs by the very sound of the word *love*, which had certainly no place in their vocabulary.

Master Clavering, after overcoming a slight fit of indignation at the name of Hugh, pursued his inquiries.

“Do you mean to say that if *they* were going to marry you to a fellow you hated, you would dare to go alone at night to the Black Dwarf like Isabel?” Master Clavering made this speech more aggravating by nodding his head in the direction of Mr. and Mrs. Scawen at the word *they*.

“That I would, if I hoped he could save me,” exclaimed Anne; “any thing rather than marry a man I could not love!”

“How long is this conversation likely to continue, Mrs. Scawen?” said Mr. Scawen, looking angrily across the table at his wife.

“Upon my word,” continued he, “when girls of that age talk of loving and hating, and marrying too, I really think there should be some means found to put a stop to it.”

“Pray when did you read ‘The Black Dwarf?’” asked Mrs. Scawen, sharply.

“When I had the influenza in the spring, ma’am,” said Anne, humbly; “Miss Elder lent it to me.”

“I don’t believe, Miss Elder did any thing so improper—not that I have much opinion of Miss Elder,” said Mrs. Scawen.

Anne coloured in silence beneath this contradictory statement.

“I think very highly of Miss Elder!” re-

torted Mr. Scawen, "she could not suppose that the book would fill the girl's head with all that nonsense—love, indeed!"

"Dear me, Mr. Scawen," exclaimed his wife, "whatever you may think of Miss Elder, you may see by the child's colouring that she is not telling the truth."

"Are you not?" asked Mr. Scawen, fiercely.

"Yes, sir, I always do," replied Anne, in a very low tone, but with a calm decision that indicated some slight resemblance to her father's character.

"I wish I could say any thing in favour of Anne's disposition!" said Mrs. Scawen, shifting her point of attack; "but I have always observed that she is very forward in her manners."

"I will take care that she reads no more novels," said Mr. Scawen.

"I dare say you may spare yourself the trouble, Mr. Scawen," said his gentle wife,

"most likely she has read every novel you have in the house, already."

"Well, why don't you answer?" said Mr. Scawen, finding that Anne remained silent under this attack.

"Perverseness," remarked Mrs. Scawen.

"Let her speak, will you?" cried Mr. Scawen.

"I have read no novel except 'The Black Dwarf,' unless Scott's poems may be considered as such," replied Anne.

"No impertinence, if you please!" returned Mrs. Scawen. "You know well the difference between poems and novels."

Except that her bosom heaved rapidly, and the colour on her cheek deepened to a bright scarlet, Anne gave no particular sign of being worried by the persevering attacks of her step-mother; but Master Clavering's patience was quickly exhausted, and as soon as he had any chance of making himself heard, he rather surprised the company by giving utterance to

his feelings on the subject. "What do you bully her for?" he said, looking alternately at Mr. and Mrs. Scawen. "What has she done? Why should she not read 'The Black Dwarf?' and why should she not say, if she means it, that she won't marry a man she does not love? I'll engage she'll be as good as her word; and so I advise you to let her alone when the time comes."

Anne was breathless with terror at this bold address; but, to her great astonishment, Mr. Scawen took it very good-humouredly, merely saying,—

"Upon my word, Mr. Clavering, you are quite eloquent in behalf of your play-fellow."

"Yes, I am," returned Mr. Clavering. "How could she have told me about 'The Black Dwarf,' if she had not read it? And dull enough I should have been if I had not had that story to amuse me. If you hate love, I hate Scotland,—and so we are even."

"I am very glad you have been amused,"

replied Mr. Scawen. "Anne is quite ready to resume her history if it interests you."

But Anne was not quite ready. It is easy to agitate some people; but it is not quite so easy to still their nerves when shaken. Her voice faltered; she tried in vain to remember the next scene, and her spirits were not enlivened by a short soliloquy of her step-mother's, in which she passed a censure upon young ladies in general, for conceit, affectation, stupidity, and sentiment.

But Master Clavering had constituted himself Anne's champion, and he was not to be daunted.

"We will have the rest of it to-morrow," he said; "it will keep well enough. Now don't you go to pour out the coffee. I'll do that. You are tired, and bothered. You will be better for some tea. Let me bring it to you."

"Don't quite turn her head, Mr. Clavering," said Mrs. Scawen, stung with jealousy at seeing him waiting upon Anne.

“Let the young people alone, if you please,” exclaimed Mr. Scawen; “they are doing very well together.”

“Dear me, Mr. Scawen!” retorted his wife.

“I say,” whispered Master Clavering, as he poured some cream into Anne’s coffee-cup, “I should like to see my governor behave in that way to me. I would soon show him who was master.”

The next day, as it was growing dark, they arrived at Parkindale. Anne could just distinguish the wild outline of the neighbouring hills, some of them planted with firs, and the glancing of a rapid stream, over which the carriage crossed before they came to the house.

It was a handsome red brick mansion, not different from what Anne had been used to see in England,—not *very* different, she was forced to allow (as she followed Mr. and Mrs. Scawen up the hall steps), from her own

home. It was very different, though, when she saw beneath the bright hall lamp, the handsome, joyous Mrs. Morton advancing with outstretched hands to welcome the party; so cordially that even Mr. Scawen relaxed into a smile, and Mrs. Scawen, with that false manner Anne knew so well, admitted that she "was truly rejoiced at last to make the acquaintance of her sister-in-law."

Mrs. Morton was tall, and as fat as it was possible to be without losing either grace or activity. Her features were short and pretty, and her complexion almost dazzling, from its strong contrasts of white and red. Ill-disposed people thought she painted; but Nature's own sweet and cunning hand laid on the beautiful blush that lighted up her laughter-loving eyes, and gave additional lustre to her sparkling teeth. Her hands were especially delicate;—white, polished, and semi-transparent, like china; and the profusion of jewels that she wore, both in rings and bracelets,

seemed to surround them with many-coloured rays wherever she moved.

As Mr. Scawen turned to point out Master Clavering, with all the importance that was due to the possible Earl of D——, Mrs. Morton, with her clear ringing laugh, stepped past him, and said gaily,—

“Ladies first, if you please, Mr. Scawen. This is your daughter. I give you joy. I have sons only; but, if I had a girl, I should like one not absolutely ugly.”

And her sweet, arch smile, and the warm pressure of her pearly fingers as she took Anne's hand in both hers, seemed to speak a sort of pleased admiration, that was extremely flattering to a young girl. And then she turned her joyous eyes upon Master Clavering, and apologized so prettily for having delayed to welcome him to Parkindale, that that young gentleman left off staring at the little blond cap, with its Christmas wreath of holly, that shaded her bright brown hair, and

replied, with perfect truth and brevity, "Never mind."

Indeed the impression made by Mrs. Morton upon this important member of the society was very favourable ; for, as he followed upstairs with Anne, Mrs. Morton gaily leading the way to show the party to their rooms, he whispered, "Look at her cap."

"Oh, isn't she pretty?" exclaimed Anne.

"Yes; and her hands are good," replied Master Clavering.

"You are glad you came now," said Anne.

"We shall see," he returned, with prudent hesitation.

"Oh, don't you like the hall?" she said, pausing at the top of the stairs to look down upon the walls hung with curious weapons and armour.

Master Clavering looked undecided; but, seeing that the party had come to a halt, he made haste to say,—

"I'll tell you what I like,—your blue

dress with the white wreaths worked on it,—so mind and put that on for dinner.”

Mrs. Scawen, who overheard this speech, took care that Anne obeyed it, not from a wish of giving pleasure to any one, for she was totally exempt from that weakness, but because her step-daughter, not quite liking the tone of command in which Master Clavering's desire was expressed, had begged her maid to lay her out a dress of another colour.

The house was full of young people, as Mrs. Morton had said. They were all cousins in some degree of relationship, and most of them older than Anne. She felt very much frightened as she entered the crowded drawing-room: she could not cling to the side of her father and Mrs. Scawen for protection, as some timid girls are able to do, and she really felt some comfort in the presence of Master Clavering, who, though silent and reserved, was as completely unembarrassed

among a crowd of strangers as if he had been in the study alone with her and Miss Elder.

Mrs. Morton, who was standing with her arm round her eldest boy, introduced her two sons to the English strangers, and then presented the Miss Andersons, with their brother, as first cousins of the Mortons: her more distant relations, she said, smiling, she would leave to become acquainted as they could; for she did not mean to weary Mr. and Mrs. Scawen, by naming to them all the Morton Morays and Douglas Mortons who chanced to be spending their holidays at Parkindale.

Master Clavering placed a chair for Anne, and stood leaning on the back of it, very much like an accepted suitor; and they both amused themselves by silently observing the company before them.

The two Mortons were rather handsome boys of sixteen and seventeen, who firmly be-

lieved themselves to be men, and were high-spirited, good-natured, ignorant creatures, like many others boys of that age. The Anderson girls were fine, healthy-looking, rural beauties, about the same age as their cousins: they were being finished at Edinburgh, and seemed divided between a very cordial inclination to enjoy their holidays, and a fear of infringing the many rules of elegance laid down for their conduct in their academy. Their brother, Sholto, was a red-haired, freckled, shambling specimen of a Scot, such as one sometimes sees represented on the stage, and believes to be a caricature. He was rather older than the other juveniles, and was studying law at Aberdeen.

When dinner was announced, Master Clavering offered Anne his arm as a matter of course, just as Frank Morton (the eldest) advanced towards her with the same intention. He looked towards his mother for help, and Mrs. Morton, turning with a laugh to Mr.

Scawen, said something about "monopolising;" but he replied in a very low tone and an impressive manner that surprised Anne, and she nodded, and said merrily,—

"Oh, then, I'm sure I won't interfere! Frank, see what good care you can take of Agnes Moray."

Agnes Moray had been the beauty of the party till Anne came; but she was dethroned by universal consent that very evening. The other girls were glad to see her empire divided; for though good-natured, she was conceited, and she ordered about all the little would-be men in an unpopular manner. Anne, who sat quite still and ordered nobody, was a rival they were more willing to admit. Indeed, she found herself growing quite intimate with Jane Anderson and Ella Morton, and had told them all the things she had learned, and had heard a great deal about their winter dresses in return. Before tea was announced, Mrs. Morton had asked her to sing,

and she had given them a German ballad, in that rich, contralto voice so thrilling and so seldom heard: and the Andersons were astonished to find that she could work in Berlin-wool; and the Douglas Mortons were delighted to hear that she could waltz and galop (the dances then in fashion); and she was become extremely popular with the ladies, when Mr. Scawen and the young gentlemen joined their circle.

Mrs. Morton expressed a laughing hope to her cousin Sholto that the boys had been very good, which meant that they had not drunk too much, and he answered for the excellence of their conduct; at which piece of intelligence she could not help pressing her cheek against her darling Frank's curling hair, as if to express her approbation that he had not behaved like a pig.

Master Clavering, who had taken a chair by the side of Anne as usual, looked hard at the mother and son as they stood together

arm-in-arm, and delivered the following oracular sentence :—

“He will plague her heart out one day, take my word for it !”

“Oh ! I hope not. What makes you think so ?” asked Anne.

“Because she ’s so fond of him,” returned Master Clavering.

“Not more fond than your father is of you,” argued Anne.

“Well, and I shall plague him when I die,” said Master Clavering.

“But you won’t die,” persisted Anne.

“We shall see,” replied Master Clavering.

“Do you dance, Master Clavering ?” asked Mrs. Morton.

He shook his head in reply.

“Then,” said Frank Morton, pressing eagerly forward to Anne, “I hope you will dance with me.”

“If you please,” said Anne, rising. “You won’t mind,” she added, turning to Master

Clavering, who looked very doleful at being left alone.

“ Oh ! go and dance ; only come back to me afterwards,” he said.

This was not easy. Waltz followed waltz, and quadrilles followed quadrilles. Every one was eager to dance with Anne. It was not until she was fairly tired out, and could plead fatigue as an excuse for sitting down, that she recollected Master Clavering ; and even then she was so hemmed in by youthful admirers, offering her lemonade, and wafers, and chrysanthemums, and moss-rosebuds, that she could not immediately fulfil her promise,

And when she did extricate herself, and made her way to him as he sat disconsolately leaning his head against the corner of the marble chimney-piece, with the feminine tact that some women acquire early, and others not at all, she said,—

“ I wish you danced, Master Clavering.”

“ Do you ? ” he said, brightening up ; “ so I

would, only it would make me look like a fool."

"But it must be dull for you, sitting here alone."

"Dull?" said Master Clavering, "I should think so; I have no tops, no wood, no—nothing in fact; and I want to make a windmill."

"Oh, you can make it when we go home again," said Anne.

"Home? when will that be? I had as soon stop in Newgate as here," said Master Clavering, glancing over the merry groups scattered through the long room, with a look of extreme dislike.

"And Mrs. Morton," pleaded Anne.

"Ah! she is a fine woman; but I don't mean to make love to *her*," said Master Clavering.

Anne laughed so merrily at this candid announcement of Master Clavering's that she attracted the attention of her father, who immediately summoned Mrs. Scawen, and advised

her to take Anne up stairs to bed, which she did, worrying her, as a dog worries a hare, the whole time her maid was undressing her, with every species of attack and insinuation, until happily she grew too sleepy to proceed, and retired to her own room.

CHAPTER VII.

And by the chimney as they stood,
They freely talked, as they thought good.

GOWER.

MRS. SCAWEN among her other accomplishments possessed the art of exasperating to a very remarkable degree. She seemed to know intuitively what would most provoke the person who was the object of her kind attentions. This quick perception of the readiest way to tread on people's feelings, is the gift of nature, and can never be acquired in perfection by less favoured individuals. She knew how to check-mate all Anne's pleasures during the week she remained at Parkindale, with a precision that could hardly be sufficiently admired. It happened fortunately for her plans that

Anne had caught a slight cold during her journey. She had often been so ill at King's Cope that Miss Elder had been seriously alarmed, without awakening the least care or attention on the part of her step-mother; but now that this cold might be made a pretext, Mrs. Scawen's maternal anxiety was unbounded. Anne was forbidden to walk in the morning, or to dance in the evening—she was not to come down to breakfast—she was sent upstairs early to bed. She was obliged to sit by the fireside, with Master Clavering as her sole companion, while the other young people were out skating, and exploring the country. She heard them talking of a waterfall in the midst of the woods, and a ruined abbey on the other side of the hill, and she saw Agnes Moray waltzing with Frank Morton, and galoping with the two Elliotts, while she sat languidly embroidering in a corner.

But what was, perhaps, more keenly annoying to a girl of Anne's age, Mrs. Scawen lost

no opportunity of making her appear ridiculous, of telling some story, or quoting some remark against her step-daughter, with the most good-humoured laughing air in the world, that made her look like a child or a simpleton.

Anne certainly did not feel very Christian towards her step-mother at these times. In fact the strong mutual distaste with which they had begun their acquaintance, had deepened with years into something very energetic. It would have required the disposition of an angel,—and Anne was not quite that,—to have felt anything like regret on the morning that Mr. and Mrs. Scawen set out for Lord K—'s seat in Perthshire. The sigh of relief which she drew as she watched them off from the hall steps, was rather differently interpreted by the bright Mrs. Morton, who drew her caressingly to her side as she said,—

“We will take very good care of you, my dear, till your papa and mamma come back again.”

"Mrs. Scawen is not my mamma, said Anne, in a low tone, as she looked up into Mrs. Morton's cordial face.

"No, that Heaven knows she's not," added Master Clavering, who was standing near.

Mrs. Morton cast a rapid look upon both, and understood at once the state of the case. She did not pursue the subject, but still pressing Anne to her side, she said, in her endearing manner,—

"Well, pretty creature, what are they going to do with you to-day?

"I don't know," said Anne, colouring bashfully; "but I should like, if you please, if it did not disturb any one, to practice for an hour after breakfast."

"Why, what a little blushing piece of propriety it is!" said Mrs. Morton, gaily; "to think of practising in the holidays. To be sure you may, my dear; you shall have the little piano in my sitting-room up stairs, and

then you will be out of the way of all these idle people."

Anne thanked Mrs. Morton warmly, and hastened to fetch her music.

"You won't mind my working while you play," said Mrs. Morton; "it will amuse me, and we shall become better acquainted."

"I shall like to be with you very much," said Anne, smiling.

"And so you are very fond of music," said Mrs. Morton, as they went up stairs together,

"I like it very much; but Hugh is so anxious that I should play well," said Anne, colouring,

"Ah! ha! pretty creature; so Mr. Clavering's name is Hugh!" said Mrs. Morton, laughing.

Anne stopped short with a look of amazement; then joining in the laugh, she said,—

"Oh! no! not Mr. Clavering; my brother Hugh."

“ Upon my word, Mr. Clavering will be jealous of your brother Hugh.”

“ Oh ! he is,” replied Anne, simply ; “ he likes no one to be spoken or thought of but himself.”

“ Mr. Clavering, my dear,” said Mrs. Morton, opening a pretty cottage piano that stood between the windows in her boudoir, and running her pearly fingers down the keys,—
“ Mr. Clavering resembles in that particular every young gentleman with whom I have the pleasure of being acquainted.”

“ Oh, not Hugh ! except Hugh !” said Anne, eagerly. “ Hugh has no jealousy—no littleness.”

“ Come,” said Mrs. Morton, drawing her chair close to the piano, “ let me hear all about this wonderful Hugh.”

Anne desired nothing better. It was seldom, indeed, that she could find a listener to this engrossing topic—her father and Mrs. Scawen were out of the question — Henry,

when at home, seldom addressed a word to her ; Hugh's name always put Master Clavering out of temper ; and Miss Elder was too calm in her expressions to satisfy Anne's enthusiasm with regard to her beloved brother. She told Mrs. Morton all her plans of happiness at Datchley ; all that Hugh meant to do for her—all that he had been to her in her troubles—how Mrs. Scawen had done her best to separate them ; but how the time was coming, though still far off, when they should go to live together, and never be parted any more.

“ See,” she said, taking a folded paper from her dress, “ what long letters he sends to me ; he is never too busy to write. I always keep his last letter about me—I sleep with it under my pillow, and when another comes I lock it up with the rest in my little casket of treasures.”

Mrs. Morton's bright eyes were dimmed for a moment as she listened to Anne's eager prognostics ; for though her own path had

been hitherto tolerably free from clouds, yet she had seen enough of the world to know that our dearest hopes are those most rarely fulfilled.

“ Well, I hope your fairy tale may all come true,” said she, archly; “ but I don’t see how you will make it agree with your other prospects.”

“ What prospects ? ” asked Anne.

“ Your papa’s intentions with regard to Mr. Clavering.”

Anne looked so exceedingly puzzled, that Mrs. Morton could not help laughing.

“ Why you can’t be quite blind to his views,” she said, “ and still less to the young gentleman’s? I am sure *he* makes no secret of them.”

Anne looked up at her, all breathless and flushed with surprise.

“ Oh ! it ’s impossible ! ” she cried ; “ papa could never think,”—

She stopped, with an uneasy frightened feel-

ing. She remembered how very much they had been thrown together.

“ Papa is a very imprudent man, then ! ” said Mrs. Morton, laughing, and turning to the music stand. “ What exercises do you use ? Czerny, Moscheles, Chopin. You mean to be an accomplished player.”

“ When I can do all these ; ” said Anne, dashing off an intricate prelude with an ease and firmness of finger that surprised Mrs. Morton.

Every morning after breakfast Mrs. Morton vanished with Anne into her boudoir, saying to the group below—

“ Now we two industrious ones are going to hide till luncheon, and nobody is to think of disturbing our meditations.”

“ Oh ! but I say,” exclaimed Master Clavering, the first time he heard this dismal announcement, “ What am I to do all that time ? Why may not I come too ? ”

“ My dear Mr. Clavering,” said Mrs. Mor-

ton, with that winning smile which disarmed everybody, "read, write, walk, ride, consider my house at your disposal, with this single little exception; but I assure you our studies are too serious to admit of any interruption."

"What is *she* learning, then?" asked Master Clavering.

"Sanscrit!" said the pretty widow, shutting the door upon the word, and leaving on his mind a vague impression of a laughing dimpled face, and a little pearly row of teeth turned mockingly towards him as she disappeared through the entrance.

And then Mrs. Morton would sit making some beautiful little fabric in crochet, and listening to Anne's delightful voice, which possessed a melancholy charm seldom found in the singing of young people, because happily they have seldom experienced as much sorrow,—that great instructor both in art and poetry; and Mrs. Morton sang charmingly herself, and found some Italian duets to practise with

Anne ; and when they were tired of music, Mrs. Morton would throw open the glass doors of her own particular bookcase, and take down from the shelves, glittering with gold, and gorgeous in crimson and purple (for she was a coxcomb about her books), one of Scott's novels, which, with his poetry, formed a prominent part of her collection.

“ From my heart I wish I had never read a line of his books,” she said, as she looked out “ Waverley ” for her young friend. “ You are more fortunate—you have all the pleasure before you. Ah ! I was a girl when I read this ; how I sobbed as I read the death of Fergus ! how my heart beat for poor Rose Bradwardine ! Young people don't care for these things now—it is the fashion to laugh at everything. Well, they are spared many a heart-ache ; but you Anne, you will never bring yourself to regard life and its struggles as ‘ the dream of a dream ; ’ you are a reality—you are worthy to read Scott, and pray cry over him as much as you like.”

Anne thankfully accepted the permission, and availed herself of it in its fullest extent.

The only person who had free admission at all times into Mrs. Morton's boudoir was her darling Frank; he would every now and then burst in with a couple of great dogs at his heels, to listen to Anne's singing, and interrupt her reading, and teaze his mother, and tumble her work about, and eat her lozenges and jujubes by handfuls, like a great overgrown boy as he was.

Anne thought it odd that James Morton never came in with his brother; for Mrs. Morton seemed very fond of him, and always spoke to him very kindly, and called him "her good James;" for he was more orderly and less noisy than his brother; he never got into scrapes, and was considerate to other people.

Perhaps, with all his careless spirits, he felt in his heart that Frank was his mother's idol, and was too proud to contend for an

equal share of her affection. There are a good many little dramas going on around us, if people would but keep their eyes open. Anne was learning this every day.

At first she could not make out why Agnes Moray would never leave her alone ; but was always saying little snappish, ill-natured things either to her or at her, in which she generally managed to include her cousin Frank. At last she began to perceive that Agnes fancied herself in love with Frank Morton, who was about the same age as herself, and who had appeared in some measure to return the sentiment until that unlucky evening when Anne first came in his way. Anne was rather amused at this—she thought it such a very funny manner of showing an attachment—it was so different from the way Rose behaved to Flora M'Ivor.

All this while she did not take much notice of Master Clavering ; her object was to keep out of his way, ever since the hint Mrs. Morton had let fall ; sometimes, when he looked more than

usually lonely and dismal, her conscience reproached her a little for her neglect ; but she thought he might perhaps misinterpret her pity, and so she still avoided him. The only person in the house with whom he ever associated was James Morton. Sometimes they would go out riding together, and after breakfast they read the papers in company, and exchanged their opinions upon the conduct of Ministers, and the condition of Europe

CHAPTER VIII.

Mar. How many ways then hath love of gaining access?
Prithee chafe not!

Guar. More ways than welcomes! Tut! tell not me!
He will come in at the ear as readily as the eye—a fair report will do as much as a fair favour.—His highways are many and free enough;—but for his byeways—ill befall a poor guardian, who would fain watch and ward them all!

ANON.

“ I DON'T know, I am sure, whether I am doing right; I suppose papa and mamma have no objection; all young people read Scott,” said Mrs. Morton, taking down another set of books for Anne.

“ Miss Elder gave me ‘ The Black Dwarf,’ ” was her only reply; for I am sorry to say that it never entered into her head to pay the least attention to anything Mrs. Scawen

might desire. She knew that every admonition from that quarter was the result of hatred and ill-temper combined ; and though she was very nearly right, it was rather a dangerous idea for a young girl to entertain.

“ I cannot see the merit of withholding works of fiction from young people,” pursued Mrs. Morton, “ they are the only persons who really enjoy them. The enchantment is over when you advance into middle life. The fairy gilding crumbles off the walls, and there’s nothing left but the bricks and mortar. You see the machinery—you anticipate the end ; there’s no pleasant suspense left. Read all the novels you can now, my dear Anne, and when you are my age, console yourself with history and ethics—with the stern realities of life.”

Anne willingly resigned herself to this pleasing duty, and was deep in the mysteries of Guy Mannering, when Frank Morton, as usual, burst into the room.

“ Oh ! I thought—I hoped—Miss Scawen was singing,” he said.

“ So she was, half an hour ago,” replied Mrs. Morton, laughing ; “ dear Anne will you have the charity—it is really a shame to ask you, but my Frank, like myself, is so fond of good singing—do give him that very sweet little German air, and then send him about his business.”

Anne good-naturedly rose, and went to the piano ; but the German air was followed by a French air, and an English air, and a Scotch air, and then by that brilliant galope which Frank Morton was never tired of hearing ; so that, when it was time to go to luncheon, Anne had not made any farther acquaintance with “ Vanbeest Brown.”

For Mrs. Morton, who would have been shocked to disturb a person from an absorbing occupation, to please any one else, thought it quite natural that Anne should leave Guy Mannering to sing to her Frank ; like many

other mothers, whose sense seems to desert them when their own children come in question, though nothing can exceed the beauty of their theories as applied to the circle of their acquaintance.

“ I have enjoyed myself so much ! I never had such a treat in the course of my life ! ” exclaimed Frank, as they entered the dining-room.

Ah ! we shall not let you disturb us again,” said Mrs. Morton ; “ we shall bolt the door to-morrow.”

Frank knew how much this threat was worth ; he laughed as he drew back Anne’s chair.

“ Is no one but Frank to have the pleasure of hearing you ? ” asked Mr. Anderson, “ we are all very much disposed to envy him. I have not been so fortunate since the first evening you came.”

“ And Miss Scawen’s voice is—oh ! beautiful ! ” said little Ellis Morton, the youngest of the cousins.

“ I did not know before that my singing was worth hearing,” said Anne, simply ; “ I shall always be very glad to sing to any one ; but we dance of an evening, which is much better.”

“ Nothing can be better than to hear you sing ‘Auld Robin Gray!’ exclaimed Frank ; “ I cannot think how you manage to make it so touching.”

“ Why, I feel it—I have a brother at sea,” replied Anne, colouring with emotion, as she generally did, when she alluded to Hugh.

Agnes Moray’s face was very cloudy during this conversation. She had heard Anne’s perfections discussed again and again by the young people ; her beauty, her unaffected good-nature, her graceful dancing, and her extraordinary voice.

Boys are more observant, and a great deal more fastidious than men. They admire good temper,—they abhor affectation,—they worship beauty,—they set great store by accomplish-

ment: whereas men are contented with a fine bold girl with plenty of money.

The Anderson girls good-naturedly echoed her praises, and believed in them; but they were wormwood to Agnes Moray, who thought herself infinitely Anne's superior.

Now Mrs. Morton had promised the young people a ball on Twelfth Night,—a regular dance, with musicians and ices, like grown-up people,—and she had asked all the young neighbourhood; and every body in the house had invited Anne to dance, so that she was really quite perplexed by the number of her invitations, and nobody had engaged Agnes Moray, who danced (she thought) with so much more style. And, to make matters worse, nobody seemed to notice that Agnes was out of temper, though she refused everything on the table, and sat discontentedly playing with her fork. Mrs. Morton merely thought she was not hungry, and, looking up from her plate, remarked that Agnes was not

eating, and reminded Mr. Clavering to take care of his neighbour ; which he never did, though she made love to him constantly, in the hope of piquing Frank into being jealous.

“ Talking of the ball,” said Frank. “ I wish you would invite a fellow I know — young Hardwicke.”

“ With all my heart,” replied Mrs. Morton, — “ not that I ever heard his name before.”

“ He was at Eton with me,” said Frank. “ He is in the —th Dragoons, and is quartered at M——. I met him out shooting the other day.”

“ Oh, the man who is come to take care of the hay-stacks,” said Mrs. Morton, carelessly ; “ send him a note, by all means.”

For that winter incendiarism was very common all over the country, and a detachment of troops had been sent to a village a few miles off, to assist in putting out the fires, and apprehending the incendiaries.

“ There was a fire last night out near

M——,” said Ellis Morton; “you know, Mr. Clavering, just as we were coming home to dinner.”

“Ah! that made you late,” said Mrs. Morton, turning archly to Master Clavering. “You went to see the fire.”

“Yes,” said he; “James, and I, and the young one there.”

“I hope you helped amazingly to put it out,” said Mrs. Morton, drawing a dish of pastry towards her.

“Clavering did wonders,” said James. “Ellis and I played a very secondary part.”

“Pray tell us Mr. Clavering’s adventures!” exclaimed Agnes, who lost no opportunity of trying to make an impression on that susceptible young gentleman.

“You hold your tongue!” exclaimed Master Clavering, looking angrily at James.

“Oh, let me tell!” cried little Ellis, not waiting, however, for permission. “You know, when we saw something red, like a great

bright wave, rising and sinking behind the hedges, James said it was a fire, and we cut across the fields, and there was a farm-house, and all the stacks in a blaze, and soldiers and people running about, and water-engines."

"Very clear," said Mrs. Morton, laughing.

"And there was this Mr. Hardwicke," continued Ellis, now very much out of breath, "standing, and directing the people; and when James asked if we could be of any use, he said he was much obliged, but that he had too many persons already—they ran over each other. He was in uniform, was not he, James?"

"A very important item in putting out a fire," said Mrs. Morton. "Anne, my dear, I hope you are all ears, something is coming out about your *preux chevalier*."

"Well," continued Ellis, "we stood still, and looked on. How the wind blew, and how it did blaze. James said we would just stop and see the roof fall in, when one of the

women began to scream, and said she had left her youngest child upstairs,—she had been so busy carrying out the others.”

“ But this is rather common, isn't it,” whispered Mrs. Morton to Anne,—“ saving a child, eh ?”

“ Well, this Mr. Hardwicke — he seemed very cool about it, didn't he, James ?—he told the woman to count her brats and see that one *was* missing ; and then he ran into the house, and upstairs ; and the stairs cracked, like the bridge over the mill in the ‘ Somnambula ;’ and then he came to the window in a moment, holding a child,—it really was a baby, you know, Aunt Morton, and screaming till it was black in the face,—and asked somebody to catch it ; and then Clavering ran forward, and held out his hat.”

Here all the young people burst out laughing. Master Clavering, who had managed to get to the window during this recital, and was looking doggedly into the garden, turned

round, and cast a sullen glance at Anne, who was leaning back in her chair, with her hands clasped over her face, shaking with suppressed laughter more than any one at table,—she pictured him to herself so completely.

“Go on, Ellis,” said Mrs. Morton, “it is so thrilling.”

“Why, then,” said the little boy, looking round rather suspiciously, as not knowing quite whether the laugh went against him or Master Clavering,—“then Clavering snatched a ladder from one of the farming-men, and set it against the casement, and ran up, and took the child through the window, and gave it to the mother, and the woman cried, and hugged him.”

Here Master Clavering shuddered, and made a face expressive of great disgust.

“But then, Aunt Morton, what do you think?” said Ellis, opening his eyes very wide, “the casement was a very narrow one — too small for Mr. Hardwicke to get through, and

he was obliged to come back by the stairs, and they broke in the middle, and down he went all among the rafters and things, and how he scrambled out I don't know; but he was preciousy singed and blackened, was not he, James?"

"I believe you," said James. "I mean to call and ask after him to-day."

"And we will go and look after the poor woman who was burnt out last night," said Mrs. Morton, who was very charitable.

"And I vote that we make a collection for her," said Mary Anderson, who had been used to that sort of thing at school.

"Oh, that will be delightful!" said Anne, taking out her little embroidered purse.

"And I think," said Mrs. Morton, taking the inlaid rosewood box which had served for the *quête*, and advancing towards Master Clavering, with a mischievous twinkle in her eyes, "from no hand would this relief be so valued as from Mr. Clavering's, who had the pleasure

of restoring the poor woman's child to her arms."

"She be hanged!" said Master Clavering, waving aside the box with great energy,—he had put a five-pound note into it, though,—
"I 'll not go near her. I 've had enough of her. She smelt of onions and peat-smoke."

"Mr. Clavering, I respect your scruples," said Mrs. Morton, gaily, "here Frank, you shall be grand almoner. And, perhaps, dear Anne, as you always dressed sooner than any of us, you would write a note for me to this Mr. ——. Frank will tell you his name."

"We have a proverb," said Frank, following Anne to the writing-table: "'Bonnie bride soon buskit.'"

"Shall I write it, Aunt Morton?" said Agnes, wishing to interrupt Anne's *tête-a-tête* with Frank.

"No, my dear Agnes, you scribble so," replied Mrs. Morton; "run upstairs, and get on your bonnet."

“For you know, Agnes, you are not soon buskit by any means,” said little Ellis.

Agnes positively cried with passion as she went to her room, and the party were all waiting for her in the hall, because she was obliged to stay and bathe her eyes before she could appear before them.

“What singular creatures boys are,” said Mrs. Morton to Anne, as they walked together; “fancy their keeping this fire to themselves all last night, and all this morning, and then only telling it by chance. I am sure I should have rushed in among you directly I got home, and proclaimed my adventures *à haute voix*; shouldn’t you? But I’m distressed to find that after all, Mr. Clavering was not quite so prominent in the affair as the other man who ran upstairs; though his holding his hat was delightful. Do you know he rather interests me, your Mr. Clavering—he is so very odd, and then though not at all handsome, he has that air which can

neither be purchased nor taught—the calm of high birth. I don't pity you so much, Anne, as I thought I should."

"Oh! dear, Mrs. Morton," said Anne; "you frighten me. I hope it is all your fancy. I am sure he does not think of me in that way—he calls me a good fellow when he is pleased. And, besides, I hope I'm wrong, but I don't think he is quite right in his head."

"And pray, my dear," said Mrs. Morton, very quietly, "who is quite right in his head? I wish I knew any body that was—I am not—and I'm sure none of my relations are. Our reasoning powers are among the most imperfect we have; but it's only when the pulse is wrong that the doctors call us mad. Marry him, my dear Anne, if that's all; and when you are older read Locke and Dugald Stewart, to convince you that you have done a wise thing.

Anne, with her heart beating very fast,

protested that she never could marry Master Clavering, — besides she meant to live with Hugh.

“ And there ’s my darling Frank,” said Mrs. Morton, still pursuing the train of her thoughts — “ he is determined to go into the army. He might remain at home a respectable and useful country gentleman — he has the *de quoi*; but no—he wishes to see the world. Is not that madness? The world! If there is a phrase more utterly without meaning than another, it is that. As if one handful of people differed from another handful—meet them where you may. I can’t imagine what a man expects to see when he moves from one country town to another. The good society must be the same everywhere, and so must the bad; and, as for horse-jockeys and swindlers, Frank might become as familiar with them at Leith Races, as on the Downs of Epsom.”

“ Master Clavering is going into the army,” said Anne.

“ I am sorry for it,” replied Mrs. Morton, “ I have seen so many promising boys corrupted into bad men in that school—boys who were a comfort and a pride to their family, turned into a dread and a curse, that I detest the army. I tremble for Frank.”

“ Perhaps,” said Anne, “ if Mr. Frank knew how much you disliked it, he would give it up.”

“ My dear little Anne,” said Mrs. Morton, smiling; “ women give up their wishes for those they love: men don’t. You can’t think how generous and complying you will find a man, when his wishes coincide with yours. And you can’t think what very little trifling things he will refuse you, if it should chance that his own feelings go the other way.”

“ Hugh would not,” said Anne, decidedly.

“ I tell you what,” said Mrs. Morton, “ I would go three hundred miles, and Datchley

can't be much less, to see this surprising Hugh of yours. Will you ask me ? ”

“ Oh, Mrs. Morton ! with how much pleasure ! ” cried Anne, colouring, as she always did when moved.

“ Miss Scawen, look ! ” said Frank Morton, coming to her side ; “ do you see that tower on your left,—it is very near M——, where the fire was.”

“ Oh, yes ! it looks like the Tower of Westburnflat in ‘ The Black Dwarf,’ ” said Anne.

“ I dare say it was inhabited by just such another worthy,” said Frank. “ Every foot of ground has its story in this country, you know ; every rood of the turf has been trampled under-foot by moss-troopers and border chiefs.”

“ Well, and so has England,” said Master Clavering, sullenly.

“ Ay ! but our country remains just as it was, at least, in this part,” said Frank ; “ in England the footprints are worn out.”

“ And a good thing, too,” said Master Clavering.

“ Now, Frank,” said James, “ if you want to go to M—— with us, you must cut across those fields; the way to the farm is straight before you.”

“ I don't care if I go with you,” said Master Clavering.

“ This is our road, then,” said Mrs. Morton, taking the box of contributions from Frank.

“ Don't forget the note to Mr. Hardwicke !” cried Agnes Moray, “ it will be a comfort, I am sure, Aunt Morton, to have some one at your ball besides those rude boys; and a cavalry officer—delightful !”

“ Just the thing for you, my love,” said Mrs. Morton, a little drily.

“ It is really hard upon you, Miss Scawen, to finish your walk without either of your beaux,” said Agnes, turning quickly round to fly this shaft at Anne; but she was engaged so eagerly in conversation with Mr. Anderson

about the murder of Archbishop Sharpe, that she had not heard the remark.

“ It ’s hardly worth repeating, my dear,” said Mrs. Morton, laughing ; “ come and tell me what you mean to wear at my ball.”

CHAPTER IX.

Though but a shadow, but a sliding,
Let me know some little joy :
We that suffer long annoy,
Are contented with a thought
Through an idle fancy wrought ;
Oh, let my joys have some abiding !

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

PERHAPS this was the happiest period of Anne's life since her father's marriage. She was liked and caressed by everybody in the house except Agnes Moray, and her ill-temper was rather flattering than otherwise, as proving how much she dreaded her rival's attractions. Mrs. Morton had become extremely fond of her, and indulged her to the top of her bent ; the young Mortons vied with each other in showing her kindness and attention,

and little Ellis idolised her to that absurd degree, that I verily believe he would have fought any one who had been bold enough to contradict his assertions.

By degrees, Master Clavering admitted Ellis to his intimacy: thinking, perhaps, that his admiration for Anne was a proof of a superior mind, or perhaps feeling that he was not a rival to be much dreaded. To reward him for his discernment he made him a ship out of a walnut shell, and gave him a very small pair of pistols which he happened to have with him. Ellis was so proud of this gift that he was always taking occasion to talk of "my pistols;" as some upstarts brag of "my carriage." He and James, and Master Clavering used to pass hours in the paddock firing at a mark, and frightening the maids who went there to hang out the linen.

The eventful Twelfth Night had at last arrived. Mrs. Morton's large drawing-room was uncarpeted, and blazing with light. The

young people were standing about in groups waiting the arrival of the other guests.

The Anderson girls, with their round white arms, and their straw-coloured hair smoothed and twisted into shining coils, looked very nice in their blue dresses. Agnes, rustling in a pink silk dress very much flounced, was playing with her bracelets, and trying to make Master Clavering talk. He was seated, as usual, by the fireside, leaning his head against the mantel-piece, and looking particularly miserable. He had been dreadfully sulky all day. It had snowed, and there had been no walking out, and he had seen very little of Anne, for she had spent the whole morning reading in Mrs. Morton's boudoir; and he had been as tiresome in dressing as any perverse child of four years old. One pair of white gloves he had torn to pieces, declaring they were too small, and another he had crumpled up and thrown into the fender because they were too large; he had ruffled

his hair as fast as it was arranged; and it was not until Power had made several feints of leaving the room, and once had gone half way down stairs, that he had allowed his toilet to be finished.

But with all his oddity he was very highly regarded by the young people. They all knew that he would one day be the Earl of D——. Because he was indifferent they thought he was fastidious, and the smallest atom of commendation from his lips was treasured up and remembered. Little Ellis stood gazing with reverence upon his very plain dress, and Agnes did hope that now she was so very smart he would take a little notice of her, and perhaps ask her to dance.

But after sitting immovable for a time he looked up and said to her, "Where is Anne?"

"Upstairs dressing, I suppose," said Agnes, scornfully; "she means to dazzle us all to-night."

"She had need be dressing," said Jane Anderson, warmly, "for up to the last minute she was making these blue rosettes for Mary and me;" and she pointed to her gauze flounces which were gathered up on one side by knots of ribbon.

"And very pretty they look," said Master Clavering.

Agnes bit her lips and fluttered her fan.

"I am so glad this Mr. Hardwicke is coming," said Ella, eagerly.

"Why?" asked Master Clavering.

"Because he saved Mrs. M'Farlane's child," said Ella.

"I hope he will ask me to dance," said Mary Anderson, thoughtlessly.

Agnes cast a look at her which said distinctly as look could speak: "Ask you to dance, indeed, when *I* am in the room!"

"Is he handsome, James?" asked Jane Anderson.

“Don’t know,” said James, “what do you say, Clavering?”

“Oh!—handsome—yes,” returned Master Clavering, sulkily; “but it don’t matter, because his regiment is going off to India: he said he was expecting to be ordered away every week.”

“Oh! then, Ella,” exclaimed Mary, “you had better make up to him, and go back to your dear Calcutta.”

Ella, who had been born in India, and was always shivering piteously, turned up her large black eyes, and sighed.

“Mind you introduce her, James,” said Mary, laughing giddily; “give her every chance, poor thing!”

“At last!” said Master Clavering, rising and going slowly towards the door, as Mrs. Morton and Anne came in together, followed by Frank Morton.

Mrs. Morton was full dressed in black velvet, with jewelled combs and bracelets; she gave

Ann a little push forward, and said, with her joyous dimple smile, to Master Clavering,—

“I hope you are very much obliged to me, it is all my work. Nature has done nothing for her, poor girl !”

Master Clavering replied by gravely nodding his head, and stood surveying Anne from head to foot.

She was looking splendid ; her large startled eyes of that peculiar hazel that looks dark blue by lamplight : her cheeks and lips of that transparent scarlet which is never seen but in early youth ; her dark shining curls adorned with a cluster of crimson and white roses, placed low behind the ear by the tasteful hand of Mrs. Morton herself ; her simple white dress relieved by the brilliant bouquet she carried in her hand, the gift of Frank Morton.

“But I say, Miss Scawen, you will dance with me first ?” cried Ellis, bustling forward.

“No you won’t, that’s too good ! Miss

Scawen dances with me !” exclaimed Frank, pushing him aside.

“ I ’m engaged to Miss Scawen, she promised me this very day at luncheon ! ” said Ellis, growing very red.

“ You be quiet, Ellis,” retorted Frank. “ Miss Scawen was laughing at you : the first quadrille, indeed ! pretty impudence ! ”

“ I promised you the first quadrille I was disengaged,” said Anne, laughing ; “ don’t be angry, please, Ellis ? ”

“ And that won’t be all the evening, so make yourself easy,” said Frank, offering his arm to Anne.

“ And above all, don’t fight, Ellis,” said Mrs. Morton : “ when one thinks of your pistols, one really trembles.

Ellis seemed more inclined to cry than fight ; he cast a revengeful look on Frank, and went to sit by Master Clavering on the sofa.

“ How very beautiful she is ! Frank seems quite struck,” said a neighbour who had

brought a whole carriage full of children, to Mrs. Morton.

“She is beautiful! She is to marry that young gentleman who is leaning his head against the chimney-piece. So my dear Mrs. Clarke, you may tell John and Ramsey to carry their *æillades* elsewhere.”

Anne now hastened, all flushed and sparkling, to Mrs. Morton's side. She had enjoyed the quadrille so much; the music was so delightful, so much nicer than the piano: she would be so sorry when the evening was over, and yet she longed for the fireworks after supper; and (could Mrs. Morton believe it?) Frank had told her as a great secret, he had determined that she should be queen!

“You and I were young once, you know,” said Mrs. Morton, turning to Mrs. Clarke; “and I had a weakness for Twelfth Night which has absolutely not quite left me yet.”

“Aunt Morton, is it not tiresome that

this Mr. Hardwicke has not yet arrived?" said Agnes Moray, flashing about a painted French fan as she spoke.

"Yes, my dear," said Mrs. Morton, who was arranging one of Anne's long spiral ringlets that had blown back and become entangled among her damask roses. "All this fuss about a boy from a barrack," she added in a low voice to Anne: "I hope he won't smell very strong of tobacco."

"I am sure I hope he does not mean to play fine, and come in just before supper," said Agnes, impatiently.

"No my dear, no fear of that, for here he is;" said Mrs Morton, rising and advancing a few steps to welcome her guest.

The music had ceased, the young dancers were walking about, and the new arrival made quite a sensation among the company.

He was a very young man (he would not have liked to be called a boy), in the uniform of a dragoon, very slight in his per-

son, with high features delicately cut, and a complexion so unusually fair, that Mrs. Morton was at once relieved from her apprehension that he indulged in smoking ; that practice with its accessories, always producing on the countenance a pleasing variety of spots and tints, the very opposite to what she now beheld.

Mrs. Morton was very much under the influence of personal appearance. She was directly struck by the quiet air of self-possession with which he advanced up the room ; and when, to accept her proffered band, he ungloved, and displayed fingers that might rival those of Charles the I, in the great Vandyke ; the impression he made upon her was completed.

“Really, Mr. Hardwicke, this is *very* good of you to come to a juvenile party of this kind,” said she, cordially.

“It was very good of you to ask me,” he replied, frankly ; “I was so dull at my inn.”

This admission which showed he was not yet aware of the resources to be found in the society of the barmaids, delighted Mrs. Morton.

“But is it to you alone that we must look for protection?” asked Mrs. Morton; “are you all by yourself? I have such a monstrous rick-yard here, that I like to know the extent of my resources.”

“Captain Cozens is quartered with me at M——,” said Mr. Hardwicke, quietly; “but he is often absent.”

So he was, indeed, and when he was not absent in body, he was apt to be absent in mind; if to be very far gone in brandy-and-water may be termed absence.

“But you dance, Mr. Hardwicke?” said Mrs. Morton; “look about you, there’s not a young lady in the room who will not be delighted to dance with you, for since the fire at M—— you must know that you are quite a hero in their eyes.”

“Who, I? I’m very glad to hear it,” said Mr. Hardwicke, with as much composure as if he had not been the person referred to. “Perhaps you will allow me to have the pleasure of dancing with you;” he added, turning calmly to Anne, who stood close to Mrs. Morton. To see Agnes Moray’s face! for she had been talking, and laughing, and edging nearer and nearer, in order to attract Mr. Hardwicke’s attention. And all in vain.

“Then let me present you,” said Mrs. Morton. “Decidedly the beauty of the room;” she added, in a low voice to Mr. Hardwicke.

Now there were few things that Anne would have liked better; first, because they had all been talking and hoping so much about him, and he was the oldest and most important partner there; and secondly, because the first moment she saw him she took it into her head that he was like Hugh. Although the resemblance existed only in her fancy, and in his being quiet, and having

eyebrows much darker than his hair. But she was pledged to little Ellis, who came edging up to remind her of her promise, and middle aged people would hardly believe what an effort it was to her to do what she thought exactly fair.

"I should be very happy," she said, "but I'm engaged for this quadrille;" and she could not help blushing, partly from vexation, and partly because Mr. Hardwicke's steady blue eyes were "perusing her face."

"Oh never mind Ellis," said Mrs. Morton, eagerly, "any time will do for Ellis, when we are alone; or,—I never saw such a forward child, he shall dance with little Jane Clarke."

"If I don't dance with Miss Scawen, I will sit still all the evening!" said Ellis, doggedly.

"It's very silly, Mrs. Morton, but he has set his mind on it;" said Anne, giving her bouquet to the little boy; then, turning with

a graceful little bend to Mr. Hardwicke, she added, "I am very sorry I am not at liberty."

He returned her bow so calmly, that she could not tell whether he was vexed or not; and Mrs. Morton wondered if he saw Anne's good-nature in the affair.

"Well then, Mr. Hardwicke, who shall it be?" said she, as the quadrille was forming.

"I think," he said, still with the same perfect tranquillity, "that if you will allow me, I should like to echo that little boy's sentiment, and to sit still, as I cannot dance with Miss Scawen."

This was a climax to Agnes Moray. She burst into a hysterical laugh, and accepted Sholto Anderson.

Mrs. Morton was exceedingly pleased at such a tribute to her favourite, she upheld him warmly in his resolution, and whenever Frank or James offered to find him a partner, she interposed, and said, laughing,—

"No, no; Mr. Hardwicke does not dance *at present*, I'm in his confidence!"

"But unfortunately, Anne was engaged for every dance before supper, and Mr. Hardwicke remained standing near the fire-place talking to Master Clavering, who had dropped into conversation with him on matters relating to the army.

Just before supper, Frank Morton went round with a card-basket, in which were the characters. All the young people crowded about him. Anne drew the Queen; and owing to some mismanagement on the part of Frank, who had fully intended to reserve that part for himself, Mr. Hardwicke drew the King.

Mrs. Morton positively clapped her hands with delight.

"You and Miss Scawen are fated to be partners some way or other this evening," she said; "I must ask your name though."

"Arthur."

“Delightful! King Arthur, and Queen Guinever.—Remember, Anne. Now if your Majesty will lead your queen to the head of the table, and bounteously disperse this cake to your loving subjects, some of them I know will be very glad.”

There were two arm-chairs at the top of the room, and the King and Queen were enthroned in great state. The Andersons made a chaplet of ivy for Anne, and her great sparkling eyes looked glorious under the dark leaves. All the young people were appointed to the different offices under the crown; there was plenty of laughing and blundering, and eating, above all.

Queen Guinever sat blushing, and laughing, at the extravagant speeches of her courtiers. The King took it as a matter of course, ordered his subjects about right royally; and treated Her Majesty with a chivalrous deference worthy the days of the Round Table. He cut the prodigious cake

and dispensed it to the Court, and then appeared a huge bowl of punch, smoking and fragrant. Frank Morton who could neither rest, nor let rest, set the punch on fire, and in that state dispensed it to the company, desiring they would drink the Queen's health in flame, as a proof of the warmth of their attachment. The young gentlemen seized this idea with enthusiasm, and quaffed the blue flame trembling on the brim of their glasses to the health of Queen Guinever.

All but the King, who having turned courteously to his consort, and wished her health and a happy reign, set down the untasted glass before him. The Court was in a tumult directly. Not to drain his glass to the health of her gracious Majesty ! it was monstrous ! horrible ! Frank was especially energetic. Ellis was quite agitated,—the Court seemed on the eve of a general rebellion. The King said he was “very sorry that his omission should cause a feeling of discontent among his sub-

jects; unlike his namesake of the Round Table, he never drank anything but water. He begged to express as much admiration and respect for Her Majesty as the most devoted of her subjects,—(and he looked full at little Ellis, who looked valiantly at the throne in return)—but he trusted that Her Majesty would allow him not to deviate from his habits, he might say his principles, even on the present occasion.”

Anne bowed and smiled, and coloured a good deal. Mrs. Morton declared that Mr. Hardwicke was a pattern to all the young people, and she hoped they would follow his example.

So order being restored, the feast proceeded. The company were pulling crackers, and eating fruit and bonbons, and the King and Queen, as you may see actors at a stage banquet, exchanged a few remarks without being at the trouble of keeping up the characters they represented.

King. Do they dance again after supper?

Queen. No; we are to have fireworks, then.

King. I really, am very unfortunate to-night.

Queen. Do you think so? I am so anxious for the fireworks,—I have never seen any except a few squibs that my brother made once in the winter holidays.

King. But then I shall not dance with you at all.

Queen (*very simply*). Oh! never mind.

King (*laughing*). I suppose you have had dancing enough by this time.

Queen. Oh, that I have! Waltzing still makes me giddy.

King. I don't like waltzing.

Queen. Do you think it wrong? Some people do.

King. No; but I thing a dance should have some intricacy in it. Some of the old dances must have been very fine.

Queen. How old ?

King. About Elizabeth's time.

Queen. Do you like Scotland ?

King. I like Edinburgh.

Queen. I wish I had seen Holyrood House, and the room where Rizzio was murdered.

King. There is a patch on the floor that they tell you is his blood.

Queen. Well, perhaps it is.

King (*doubtfully*). Perhaps.

Queen. That wicked Darnley !

King. Well, she paid him out for his share in it, at any rate.

Queen. But that is doubtful.

King. I don't think so !

Queen. Why ?

King. Because she was not the sort of woman to stick at trifles.

Queen. Trifles, indeed !

King. Did you ever see her picture ?

Queen. No.

King. What a beautiful bouquet.

Queen (throwing down the bouquet, and starting up).—Oh ! the fireworks !

King (following). Won't you come out on the lawn ? You would see them so much better ; and it is not very cold to-night.

“ The lawn ! Oh, my dear Mr. Hardwicke, I don't know what to say,” exclaimed Mrs. Morton ; “ if Anne should take cold,—and then the rockets—sometimes the sticks fall and kill people, don't they ? ”

“ They shall not kill anybody to-night, Mrs. Morton,” said Mr. Hardwicke, quietly.

“ And then your shawl, and your shoes, my dear Anne,—do wrap up, pray,” said Mrs. Morton, anxiously. “ Miss Scawen's furs,—that is, if you really wish it.”

“ Yes, I do wish it,” said Anne, almost as quietly as Mr. Hardwicke.

So she took his arm and went out.

“ I hope I shall not find you laid up with cold, when I call to-morrow,” said Mr. Hardwicke.

"Oh, no," said Anne, "I am quite warm. How very beautiful! What streams of light! What showers of many coloured sparks!"

"Are you afraid of the crackers? They have no respect for royalty, you see,—and your dress is so fragile."

"They are worse than the rockets, I think. Ah! here comes another! Am I to be burnt?"

"I hope not," said Mr. Hardwicke, laughing. "Come this way, young one. You are one of the Queen's pages,—keep close to me. I think between us we may protect Her Majesty from the crackers."

"Oh, the crackers!" said little Ellis; "don't be frightened, Miss Scawen, I'll take care of you. I have just been letting off two rockets, and a Catherine-wheel."

"You are in luck not to have a moon," said Mr. Hardwicke.

"Yes. I arranged that," said Ellis, "I did,—you may laugh;—but you know, Miss

Scawen, Frank wanted to have the fireworks on New Year's-eve, and I looked in the almanac, and made him put it off till to-night."

There was hot elder wine in the hall for those who had been out, and those who were going away. The servants handed round the tall glasses, and long strips of toast.

Mrs. Clarke and her seven children, Lady Armstrong and her five, were standing and sipping in their cloaks and furs.

"You can't refuse the stirrup cup," said Frank Morton.

"Pardon me," said Mr. Hardwicke, declining the wine.

"Why how do you manage at the mess? Don't they laugh at you?" asked Master Clavering.

"Of course," said Mr. Hardwicke, as calmly as if it had been the most agreeable thing in the world.

"I think," said James, as he returned

from packing Mrs. Clarke's carriage, "that it is King Arthur's gig which stops the way."

"King Arthur's gig," caused an universal peal, in the midst of which he took his leave.

"I think, my dear," said Mrs. Morton to Anne, her usual confidante, "that I have found what Diogenes was looking for all his life. Of course, as you are still in the school-room, you know all about Diogenes."

CHAPTER X.

This new come shepheard has his market mar'd.
Old love is little worth when new is more prefarr'd.

SPENCER.

"I HOPE, Miss Scawen, you were pleased with the ball last night," said Agnes Moray, the next morning at breakfast.

"Pleased!" exclaimed Anne, "oh! I can't tell you how much I was delighted."

"I hope we were all pleased," said Mrs. Morton.

"That we were," cried the Andersons.

"Aunt Morton, do you know what o'clock it was before I got to bed?" asked Ellis; "half-past two; and Ramsey Clarke was so tired, he could hardly keep his eyes open. I could have sat up an hour longer."

"You must have been tired, I am sure, Miss Scawen," said Agnes, "for you did not sit down one single dance. I believe you danced five times with Frank."

"Only four," said Anne, laughing.

"I don't at all like your Mr. Hardwicke," said Agnes.

"*Whose* Mr. Hardwicke, my dear?" asked Mrs. Morton.

Agnes not being able to answer this question, gave a little scornful laugh, and buttered her toast.

"Because if nobody owns him, I think I shall put in my claim," said Mrs. Morton, gaily; "I rather like your Mr. Hardwicke."

"He is going to India," said Master Clavering, with a satisfied air.

"I like him extremely," said James.

"I say, Miss Scawen, did not we take good care of you?" asked Ellis, "Mr. Hardwicke and I. I don't believe a single spark reached you."

"You must have been very cold, Miss Scawen," said Agnes; "I wonder how you could venture out of doors."

"Oh, no, nothing went wrong; it was all delightful," said Anne.

"Lady Armstrong has invited you all for Thursday," said Mrs. Morton.

There was a general exclamation of joy.

"I wonder if Hardwicke would like to go," said Frank.

"You can ask him," said Mrs. Morton, "and include him in our party if he does."

"He will be sure to like it," said Ellis.

"And why, Master Ellis?" asked Mrs. Morton.

"Because then he will dance with Miss Scawen," said Ellis.

Anne coloured, and stammered something about a ridiculous idea.

"Oh! Miss Scawen, may I hope for the first dance?" exclaimed Frank.

"And the next for me," cried Ellis.

“ Vouchsafe me one during the evening,” said Mr. Anderson.

“ Miss Scawen, which will you fix for me ? ” exclaimed James.

“ Stop, good people,” said Mrs. Morton, holding up her pearly hand, “ I save the second dance for myself, and Anne cannot promise anybody ; with that exception, I beg you will all try your fortunes.”

“ Dancing ! what’s the use of it ? ” exclaimed Master Clavering, suddenly bursting into the conversation ; “ there’s nothing but dancing, I think ; we never danced at King’s Cope ; and if you did but know how stupid you all looked, you would be precious glad to leave it off.”

“ You and I, Mr. Clavering,” said Mrs. Morton, joyously, are prudent enough to sit still ; our dancing days are over, but we must be lenient to these young people ; it’s very natural, you know, at their age to be fond of it.”

"I thought you said you wanted to dance with Anne," remarked Master Clavering.

"No, Mr. Clavering," said Mrs. Morton, with her brightest glance, "I am not so ambitious; I certainly should like to dance Sir Roger de Coverley with *you*, but you won't ask me."

Master Clavering looked rather perplexed, and at last he turned to Anne.

"I say, are you going upstairs reading this morning?" he asked.

"To be sure," she said.

"Oh, don't for this once," he said, "I see nothing of you; it's a shame. If I had known how you meant to go on, I would not have come here at all."

"It is very silly, Master Clavering, to talk so," said Anne, "you have your own amusements, and I have mine; it was very well at King's Cope, where we were alone."

"Give him this one morning," said Mrs. Morton.

"Ah! you had better," said Master Clavering.

"He is so provoking," said Anne; "and I shall not attend in the least to you, for I shall draw with Jane Anderson.

The Anderson girls, with their usual good nature, brought their portfolios and colours for Anne. They were to show her how to tint sepia drawings. Mr. Anderson cleared the writing-table for them; Master Clavering sat with a Dutch tile on his knees, indefatigably rubbing sepia and indigo. Ellis and Ella standing hand-in-hand at the window, were looking dismally at the falling snow.

"How like they are, those twins," said Jane.

"Wonderfully," said Mary.

"I say, just look at Agnes," said James.

She was a most conceited little creature, and she had taken it into her head to throw herself back in an arm-chair, with a shawl folded negligently round her, and her pretty feet extended on a foot-stool; she had dropped

her book on her lap, and pretended to be immersed in thought.

"I say, Agnes, we are all admiring you very much," cried Mary.

"Not all," said Master Clavering, without looking up from his colours.

"I am very much obliged to you," returned Agnes, ironically.

"You can't think how interesting you look," said Frank.

"Really I did not know where I was," said Agnes, languidly; "I was so absorbed in this charming poem. I do wish you wouldn't look at me."

"Oh! we won't," said Mary.

"We will spare your feeling," said Frank.

"Perhaps you wouldn't mind our taking a sketch of you," said Jane, laughing.

"I should be too happy, I'm sure, to afford you any amusement," returned Agnes, raising her book to a level with her eyes.

"What is she reading?" asked Mary.

“ ‘ Childe Harold ! ’ ” said James.

“ It is very doleful, isn't it ? ” inquired Jane.

“ It is very improper,” returned Mary, decidedly.

“ It is all nonsense,” remarked Master Clavering.

“ I wonder what it is about,” said Anne, eagerly.

“ Never mind,” said Master Clavering.

“ Oh ! Jane, what is it ? ” asked Anne.

Jane looked respectfully at Master Clavering to know whether she might proceed.

Anne pulled her by the sleeve.

“ Why, some of the girls at our school have read Byron,” she said ; “ and I know they always read him slyly, and would not have let the teachers see them on any account ; so I suppose he is very bad.”

“ If you want to know,” said Master Clavering, doggedly ; “ it is about a man who was such a blackguard that nobody cared

for him; and he, in return, cared for nobody."

"Well, that 's not very amusing," said Mary.

"Nobody said it was amusing," remarked Master Clavering.

"I think you are a very rude boy," said Anne.

"That darling Childe! it is quite shocking to hear you abuse him!" exclaimed Agnes Moray.

"Come, are you friends?" asked Master Clavering, placing before Anne the Dutch tile covered with sepia.

"Pretty well," said Anne.

"Then shake hands," he said.

"Oh! don't plague me—there. Now go away please, and leave us to draw. I don't like a person watching me while I do the outline," said Anne, turning away.

"Oh! I can't bear it," said Jane Anderson; "it makes my hand shake."

"Can't you take them all off to the stables, Frank?" asked Mary.

"I can take those who like to go," said Frank, laughing; "I can't march them off against their will."

"I shall stay here," said Master Clavering.

"Master Clavering has an attraction," said Mary, laughing, and glancing at Anne.

"Greater than the stables?" said Frank.

"Well, I have—there!" retorted Master Clavering, taking hold of Mary's sketch. "And what do you make your lines crooked for? You are not drawing the tower of Pisa."

"One would think you came *out* of a stable, to hear you talk!" exclaimed Anne, indignantly. "I wonder you don't like to behave as a gentleman, when you will one day become Lord D——!"

"No, I shan't!" replied Master Clavering.

"You should not, if I could help it," said Anne; "for I don't think you are at all a

fit person to be an earl—but you will ; and I 'm sorry for it.”

“ Shall I ; when I 'm dead,” said Master Clavering, sullenly.

“ Oh, dear !” cried Jane Anderson.

“ Dreadful !” said Mary.

“ Oh ! don't mind him,” said Anne ; “ he 's fond of talking in that way. I don't pity him a bit—he is not going to die.”

“ I say, Master Clavering, what is the matter with the lock of my pistol ?” asked Ellis, who had been regaling himself for some time by snapping those warlike appendages.

Master Clavering went to the window, and asked for a screw-driver and some tow.

“ That 's a mercy,” said Anne ; “ he will be all the morning poking at that lock.”

“ You don't seem at all afraid of him,” said Jane.

“ Of *him* ?” said Anne ; “ why there 's nothing very awful about Master Clavering.”

“ Only when one thinks what he will be,”

said Jane. "Imagine some years hence, when I shall say, 'The Earl of D—— rubbed my sepia, and indigo.'"

"And rubbed it very badly; it's too thin," said Anne, laughing.

"How I should love to be a countess!" exclaimed Jane. "Of course it is too delightful ever to happen; but fancy the very servants saying, 'your ladyship.'"

"Dear!" said Anne, "I should not care for that, but if King William were ever to —— if, you know, there should ever be another coronation, it would be nice to have a good place to see it."

"Oh! heavenly; and then a coronet to put on your head!" said Mary. "How grand!"

"Well, I think a coronet's a very clumsy thing," said Anne; "at least a man's coronet—I never saw a woman's."

"Oh! but tell us where did you see it?" exclaimed both the girls, eagerly.

“ At Sherwood, when we were children—we were spending the day there.”

“ And who lives at Sherwood ? ”

“ Lord Orrington—he is not often there ; but Henry knows some of the Sherwoods very well ; he was at school with them, and we used sometimes to be asked to go on the water, and then they came to fish at King’s Cope.”

Agnes here joined the party ; it was so very nice to hear about lords and ladies.

“ And as we were playing in the gallery, Lord John took out a coronet from a chest, and wanted to put it on my head, but I ran away ; it was such a great ugly cap ; and only made of tinsel and trumpery.”

“ Is Lord Orrington a marquis ? ” asked Agnes, with a very grand air.

“ Yes.”

“ Are his sons pleasant ? ” said Agnes.

“ I don’t know, I used to be afraid of Lord John ; he was so mischievous, but he

has been gone to sea a long time, and Lord William was a great deal older than we were. Lady Lucy and I were great friends when we met, which was very seldom. Her sisters were all married."

"How many sons are there?" said Agnes.

"Four. I never saw the eldest, and Lord Robert was younger than Lucy.

"Is he handsome?"

"Oh, no; very ugly: they are not a handsome family. Lady Orrington is very plain. That 's all I know about the Sherwoods," said Anne, turning suddenly to her sketch.

"How old is Lady Lucy?" asked Mary.

"Eighteen. She is to come out this year."

"Is she fair or dark?"

"Very fair."

"Why then she must be pretty," said Mary.

"I have not seen her for three years," said Anne; "nobody thought her pretty then; but she was very gentle and pleasant."

"Where has she been all that time?" asked Agnes.

"At Mote. Lord Orrington prefers Mote to Sherwood, because it is nearer to New-market."

"Then he is on the turf," said Agnes.

"Yes; Henry was staying at Mote last autumn," said Anne; "and he went to New-market with them."

"Suppose your brother should marry Lady Lucy," said Agnes.

"Oh, dear!" said Anne, colouring. She managed to stop in time; she was going to add, that she hoped not; for she liked Lady Lucy too well to wish that she should marry Henry. She had a very bad opinion of Henry.

"How very nice to know that sort of people!" said Agnes. "I quite envy your going to Sherwood."

"I used to like to go with Hugh," said Anne, "because they have a large piece of water, and a boat with a sail to it—a great

deal better than our little boat at home. Hugh could manage it so well. I love sailing. But Lady Lucy was a great coward, and Lord John always pretended that we were going to upset."

"And did not that frighten you?" asked Agnes.

"No; I used to look at Hugh, and I knew by his face that nothing was the matter."

"And I suppose you dined in the school-room," said Agnes.

"Yes; with the French governess. Lord John was always teasing her. He had a pet squirrel, and one day he put it in her muff. Poor Madlle. Dalmont went into hysterics."

"What a delightful creature!" said Agnes.

"Lord John? I did not like him—he had a great Newfoundland dog, and it would steal quietly behind you, and then spring up and set its paws on your shoulders; I dreaded that dog,—and then he stammered very

much, and I did not like him to speak to me."

"Well, good people," said Mrs. Morton, coming in, "I suppose you have something very pretty to show me!"

And sitting down to the table with her bright face and sparkling fingers, she really had very much the effect of a gleam of sunshine among them.

"Ah! you may ask," said Master Clavering; "except a crooked old castle that this one began (pointing with the pistol to Mary) I don't believe that they have put pencil to paper. They have been gossiping all the morning about those stupid Sherwoods."

"Well, it 's our privilege, you know," said Mrs. Morton, looking up archly in his face as he stood beside her; "but Mr. Clavering, I own I 'm very foolish, only that pistol gives me an odd kind of feeling, a little akin to fear, I believe."

"It 's not loaded," said Master Clavering

“ I dare say not,” said Mrs. Morton, “ only young gentleman have rather undefined ideas on that subject now and then. My darling Frank very nearly shot James with a gun that was not loaded (he thought); and as I was coming down stairs at the time, and heard the shot rattle against the banisters, I allow myself, on this one point, to be as unreasonable as ever I like.”

Master Clavering put the pistol into his pocket without saying a word.

“ Thank you so much!” said Mrs. Morton. “ Now I can enjoy looking at the drawings. What, Anne, have you done all this? Oh! here is Mary’s leaning tower; it does stoop a little—I would add a bit on here—I don’t draw the least, but everybody can find fault, can they not, Mr. Clavering?”

Master Clavering, who was intently surveying her very beautiful hands, made no reply.

“ Some one coming up the steps with Frank,” said Mrs. Morton, turning to look

out of the window. "My dear Anne, it is King Arthur. Why, Mr. Hardwicke, what a ride you must have had through the snow."

"I rather like it," said Mr. Hardwicke, after he had very quietly recognised those whom he knew in the room. "I shall see no more snow where I am going."

"Yes; one does not like to see or do anything for the last time, some wise philosopher says," remarked Mrs. Morton; "but there are I don't know how many exceptions to the rule."

"I'm sure I shall like to go to school for the last time;" said Ellis, eagerly.

"And I wish I could see the last of the snow," said Ella, drawing her footstool closer to the fire.

"Ah! Mr. Hardwicke," said Mrs. Morton, "if you could take these two children with you, one in each pocket, all the way to Calcutta, how delighted they would be."

The two children drew near to Mr. Hard-

wicke, with eager looks, as if they thought there was some little chance for them.

“ But if I cannot take you,” said Mr. Hardwicke, kindly to Ella, “ perhaps I can take something for you, if you have any friends at Calcutta—is there anything you would like to send ?”

“ Oh ! yes, if you would be so kind—if you did not mind the trouble,” exclaimed Ella, “ I want to send papa—you know Aunt Morton—that kettle-holder I worked for him.”

Most of the young people burst into violent fits of laughter. To send a kettle-holder to India—what a useful present. They supposed Ella fancied that there was a blazing fire in the drawing-room, and the kettle singing on the hearth. What a good memory she must have ! But Anne whispered to her that her papa would like to have a specimen of her work, and that he would value it quite as much as if it would be useful ; and Ella looking from Anne to Mr. Hardwicke, and seeing

that he remained quite calm and unmoved among all the laughing, went to her work-basket, and brought out the kettle-holder.

“Do you think papa will care for it?” she said, timidly offering it to Mr. Hardwicke.

“I think so; it will remind him of home,” he said. “Will you fold it in paper and direct it? You will do it more neatly than I should.”

Ella was very busy and important, folding first in silver paper, then in another cover, and directing under the superintendence of her brother Ellis, to her papa, with all his proper official titles.

Agnes, looking very pretty and scornful, sat rolled up in her scarlet shawl resolved to take no interest in the matter. She thought she could mortify Mr. Hardwicke by appearing not to know that he was in the room; so she continually addressed little remarks to every one else, taking care to pass him over.

“Aunt Morton had I not better ring for

more coals? The fire is going out I think. Everybody is so absorbed in that wonderful kettle-holder. Pink ribbon? No, child, I have no pink ribbon—why can't you tie your parcel with a bit of string? Frank, I wish you could find the 'Book of Gems'—I think there is a view of Chillon in it. Is not the post very late to-day, Mr. Anderson? I am rather expecting a letter from mamma. Ellis you have my footstool—change if you please—this is not the one I like best."

She could not make them attend to her—they were talking to Mr. Hardwicke—they had so many questions to ask him. They fancied that he had entered life, while they, still at school, were only on the threshold.

Anne, although silent, lost not a word he said. She fancied him still more like Hugh—grave, and very much in earnest, yet perfectly unaffected; and so few young people are unaffected. He was as plain as Master Clavering, but not so blunt.

“Do you like the thoughts of going to India?” said Frank.

“Yes; I very much wish to go—it is the only place now, where you are likely to see any service,” he replied.

“Certainly a campaign must be good fun,” said Frank.

Mr. Hardwicke laughed slightly. He was not Quixotic, and he did not care to explain that he expected nothing funny in the horrible scenes of battles and sieges. He knew that to attain a great object there must be a great outlay, and as that was his calling, he desired to follow it, instead of growing more and more stupid every day of his life in country quarters.

“I should think you would find the voyage very dull,” said James.

“I shall learn what I can of the language on my way out,” said Mr. Hardwicke.

“But you could do without the language,” said Frank.

“Better with it,” replied Mr. Hardwicke ;
“besides it will pass the time.”

Just like Hugh ! thought Anne. He learned Spanish on his way to Valparaiso.

“Hardwicke goes to Lady Armstrong’s,” said Frank to his mother ; “she invited him.”

“Then Mr. Hardwicke I advise you to Parkindale on your way—it is a half-way house between M—— and the Armstrong’s. Come to dinner, and leave, if you must, the next morning ;” said Mrs. Morton, with a little shy glance towards Anne.

Mr. Hardwicke happening to be looking in the same direction, he accepted Mrs. Morton’s invitation with much pleasure, and then crossing to the table where Anne sat, said frankly,—

“Am I too late Miss Scawen ? I hope not this time. I hope I may have the pleasure of dancing with you on Thursday.”

“Yes ; thanks to my prudence you may,” said Mrs. Morton, laughing. “Anne was

besieged by them as usual, but I pounced on the second quadrille, and I make you a present of it. Of course you are very grateful. No, don't bow to Anne: she has nothing to do with it. She had rather not perhaps. It is *me*, if you please, Mr. Hardwicke. Have you got Ella's parcel? In six months, I suppose, we shall know whether you have ever delivered it."

Mr. Hardwicke laughed, protested against forgetting the packet, again thanked Mrs. Morton for her kindness, shook hands with Ella, bowed to Anne, and then was hurried by Frank to the stables. He had a new horse that he had not quite bought, and Mr. Hardwicke's opinion must be taken.

"Oh! how I like him!" said Ella.

"So do I, little Missy," said Mrs. Morton.

"And pray Miss Scawen are you one of his admirers?" said Agnes, tossing her head.

"Yes; I fancy him like my brother," said Anne, quietly.

“ Very convenient ! ” said Agnes.

Anne felt provoked with herself that she was embarrassed with Agnes’s question and reply. She had heard and seen nothing but good of Mr. Hardwicke, and there was no reason that she should not think well of him ; but still she coloured. She thought it was because Master Clavering was staring at her, but he had often stared before, and she had cared no more than if it had been Miss Elder. While she was pondering on her feelings, little Ellis came up to her, and, leaning on the arm of her chair, said,

“ Miss Scawen, I have been thinking ”—

“ Well, Ellis ”—

“ I wonder, since Twelfth Night is past, whether the Armstrongs will have a Twelfth-cake on Thursday.”

“ You greedy pig ! ” cried Agnes.

“ It is not for the cake, but the fun. I should like to see Miss Scawen queen again.”

“ And who should be the king ? ” asked Anne, laughing.

“ Myself, of course ; ” said Ellis, drawing himself up.

“ Bravo ! ” said Master Clavering.

CHAPTER XI.

I coud nevir love yit but it did me harm :
For evir my manere hath be to love ovirmuch.
Now Christ is blessing, quod the Pardonere go with al such.
CHAUCER.

“ARE you not afraid, with so many young people in the house, that they will, some of them, be falling in love with each other?” said a neighbour to Mrs. Morton, one morning that they were all scattered about the garden, Mr. Hardwicke among the rest, amusing themselves with the fallen snow.

“I? not the least in the world,” returned Mrs. Morton, laughing. “My dear Mrs. Graham, it is not the vice of the age; boys and girls calculate now-a-days, they don’t fall in love: I wish they would, it would do them all

the good in the world. Why, even my darling Frank, if he sees a pretty girl, always asks whether she has got any money."

"Who is that beautiful girl speaking to Frank? not one of the Morays, is she?"

"No; my young English friend, Anne Scawen. Frank is wild about her, but I'm not in the least afraid of his running away with her; though, I dare say she will have a tolerable fortune: she is engaged to that young man who is walking towards the party on the lawn; a great match, I understand; but they are both so young, that I don't quite like the idea of fixing their destiny before they have seen a little of the world. They may both repent it."

"Why, if there is no love to be had, my dear Mrs. Morton, what can they do better?"

"True; I admit the wisdom of the fact; but I can't reconcile myself to it, notwithstanding. That is what makes me so fond of novels, one gets a little love there, at all events."

“But you, my dear Selina,” said Mrs. Graham, “need not go to the pages of a novel for a great deal of love, if you were so inclined.”

A deep blush suffused Mrs. Morton's lovely face ; not because she in any degree shared the love referred to, but because she was conscious and vexed at the allusion, to a very ardent admirer of hers, a person of rank and fortune, a widower, with grown-up children ; a most desirable match in every point of view, whose attentions she had always repelled, because, without any phrases on her part, she had been sincerely attached to her husband, and death had no power to sever the tie which bound her to his memory.

She turned to the window, as if to change the subject, and directed her friend's attention to the group on the lawn.

“See how busy they all are with the snow,” she said ; “that was my Frank's idea ; he insisted on building a snow man for Anne

Scawen, who had never seen one. Look at young Hardwicke, he is working as hard as any of them, just as if he were a boy."

"Why, he is almost a boy," said Mrs. Graham.

"That makes the wonder; if he was forty I should think nothing of it; but a young man of nineteen to allow himself to be a boy, argues a very striking independence of character. Look at that little coquette, Agnes, how she is trying to attract the young officer; but he has no eyes for any one but Anne."

"Perhaps that is the reason why that young man looks so uncomfortable," said Mrs. Graham; "the one in the brown redingote, standing by the laurels."

"Anne's intended; very likely. He is extremely jealous; but I am glad to say she takes no notice whatever of his whims. When she sings, which she does delightfully, it is beyond everything to see Mr. Hardwicke leaning on the piano in a state of ecstasy, and

Master Clavering in the chimney corner scowling—no he can't scowl, his face is too wooden—but looking as much as possible like one of the murderers in Macbeth."

"Well, I should be half afraid in this particular case, said Mrs. Graham."

"My dear Jane,—afraid of what? Did you ever hear of a young officer making an offer to a girl? he flirts naturally with the prettiest he knows, wherever he is quartered, and then goes away without concerning himself farther about the matter, often without the ceremony of an adieu."

"And the poor girl, Selina,—"

"Oh! the poor girl does exceedingly well, thank you; she looks a little dull at first at the loss of her suitor, and finds another with all convenient speed. I do wish my darling Frank would put on a great coat; but I suppose he wouldn't, if I were to send one out to him."

"Of course he would not; but there is the

bell for luncheon ; the young people are flocking in fast enough. Is that young Anderson."

" Yes ; he is not likely to break any hearts, I should say."

" Is that Alic. Moray ?"

" Yes, the brother of Agnes ; he came to us yesterday."

" How he is grown."

" All the Morays are tall."

" At least the Morays of Deansfield.

" I mean that branch. Upon my word, Selina, this Mr. Hardwicke is a very handsome person."

" But my Anne, is she not beautiful ?

" Yes, really ; what wonderful eyes ! and what a complexion — what rich red and white !"

" And by candle-light you have no idea of her brilliancy ; and her manners have that soft *câlinerie* (we haven't got the word) that really acts like a spell ; poor ugly Sholto is over head and ears—"

“Not in *love*, you know,” said Mrs. Graham, laughing.

“Don’t be mischievous, Jane ; Oh ! see, that tiresome plague, Agnes, has begun to throw snowballs ; it is really very rude. Ah ! I thought so. It spreads like wildfire. They are all at it—all but Anne and that nice Mr. Hardwicke. Agnes, you romp, be quiet !”

“It is in vain, my dear Selina, to rap against the window-frame ; let them pelt each other, there is no harm done ; besides, it gives an opportunity to your Mr. Hardwicke to defend your beautiful guest : capital ! see, he has escorted her to the steps without a single snowball reaching her.”

“No thanks to Agnes Moray,” said Mrs. Morton, who observed with what perseverance she had aimed at Anne, and persuaded some of the others to throw in the same direction.

Mr. Hardwicke, who had been walking calmly by the side of Anne, talking all the way, with his hat in his hand, which he raised

every now and then to turn off the snowballs which flew around them, from his companion, had now brought her safely to the foot of the steps.

She turned round with a gesture of thanks full of grace and expression, and a little mocking sign of defiance to the rest of the young people who were clustering towards the entrance, and ran up into the house.

“ You are cold, I am sure,” said Mrs. Morton to Anne, as they all thronged towards the fire.

“ Cold? I believe you she is!” exclaimed Master Clavering, catching hold of her hand.

She withdrew it hastily, colouring as she did so, for she observed Mr. Hardwicke's earnest gaze directed to them both.

“ I 'm much obliged to you, Mr. Hardwicke, for taking such good care of my little friend; she is not used to make her way among such a rabble,” said Mrs. Morton.

Mr. Hardwicke bowed in his usual quiet

manner. Master Clavering favoured him with one of his spiteful glances, and Agnes, who was always on the watch to conciliate Master Clavering, remarked to him that it was all very fine, but, for her part, she did not admire people who were too grand to join in whatever amusement was going forward.

"Take care, Selina," whispered Mrs. Graham, as she took her leave; "if I am not much mistaken, those two young people are forming an attachment."

"Nonsense, my dear! at their age!" laughed Mrs. Morton, as she shook hands with her friend; but she went to her writing-table, and sitting down as if to write her letters, she began, with rather an uneasy feeling, to observe attentively their manner towards each other.

"I don't care a straw if he's ever so much in love with *her*," she soliloquised, as she drew her pen-holder through her fingers; "men always get over it, and it serves them

right, for they are always more or less inconsiderate or unprincipled in their dealings with women: but if my poor little Anne takes a stupid fancy to him, what 's to be done? And he's going off to India any day, and I don't know whether he has a farthing of money. Certainly, it is a very inconvenient world in some respects. But she won't run off with him,—I am safe there,—she is too proud. And I don't think he would ask it. Well—they are talking very calmly together. I don't believe they are more in love than I am. Jane Graham was always famous for taking fright at shadows. I remember her when the scarlet fever was about. People—even young people—may, I suppose, like to talk to each other without always wanting to marry. I wish he were not so handsome though: and that calm demeanour is so effective. He has so much self-possession, and such a perfect hand. Well, I don't see what I can do. I can't forbid him the house.

And if he were to cut out Master Clavering, I declare I should only be amused, as far as I am concerned."

Mrs. Morton scribbled a few notes while she made these reflections; and Master Clavering, equally engaged in watching the supposed lovers, sat by the fire humming to himself. Anne and Mr. Hardwicke, standing by the window, were talking quietly, but so earnestly, that they were quite unconscious of what was going on around them.

"And you don't know how long you will be absent," said Anne.

"Not exactly. My father talks of getting me exchanged into some other regiment in a few years, but, of course, that must be uncertain; and as he has no strong reason for wishing me to return, he will not be so likely to exert himself. Service in India presents many advantages to a poor man."

"Then, in fact," said Anne, her voice faltering a little, "you can't look for-

ward to seeing your friends at any definite time."

"No ; five or six years, but it may be longer ; and, then, life is so uncertain out there."

Anne turned pale.

"And yet you wish to go," she said.

"It was my earnest desire a fortnight ago," he replied ; but the tranquillity of his voice, if it was meant to disguise his meaning, could not make her think anything but that since he had known her his wishes had undergone a change.

She coloured deeply, and then said, in a hurried tone,—

"Even when a time is fixed, it is not always certain, and then the disappointment falls heavily on the friends. Hugh was coming home last autumn, but he was appointed to another ship, and now it is delayed for three years more.

Mr. Hardwicke had heard, you may be sure, of Hugh. He said, gravely,—

“ I think that must have almost broken your heart.”

“ So I thought,” said Anne, sadly. “ I really believed I should die ; but I think now people can bear anything. I have known so much grief, I often wonder if life is made up of sorrows.”

“ I hope not in your case,” said her companion ; “ certainly not in mine, since I have known you.”

“ Oh ! I have been very happy, too, at Parkindale,” said Anne, trembling, and trying to turn the conversation into a more ordinary channel. “ I shall never forget the time I have spent here.”

“ Nor I,” said Mr. Hardwicke.

“ And when do you leave ? ” asked Anne.

“ I am expecting orders every week : and you ? ”

“ We go home in ten days,” said Anne.

“ You have heard, then ? ”

“ Yes ; at least Master Clavering had a

letter this morning. Papa and Mrs. Scawen come here this day week, and leave for King's Cope three days afterwards."

"And then—" said Mr. Hardwicke, glancing towards Master Clavering.

"Oh! I wish not to look forward. I wish to enjoy these few days so completely. I am not happy at home," said Anne, in a low voice.

"I shall never hear of you in India," said Mr. Hardwicke, "though I shall never cease to think of you,—unless, indeed, I see your name in the papers."

"Mine!"

"On your marriage."

"*You* to believe that!" said Anne, reproachfully.

"Oh!" if I dared to offer you another home, however distant!" said Mr. Hardwicke, now for the first time betraying in his agitated manner how deeply his feelings were concerned.

Anne raised her finger to her lips: she saw Master Clavering's eager face watching her, as if he could hear their words.

"Would you refuse it?" asked Mr. Hardwicke, more earnestly.

"No," she whispered.

"Anne!" cried Mrs. Morton from her writing-table.

She was obliged to go.

Mrs. Morton wished to use Anne's little grasshopper seal. That is, she wished to break up a conference that was growing a little too particular,—and she was a little too late, that was all.

Anne's fate was fixed for life.

Poor Mrs. Morton! she did all she could. She kept Anne looking for seals and folding letters until Mr. Hardwicke took his leave, and then her composure was a little restored by finding that he did not attempt to shake hands with Anne: he merely bowed to her as he did to the other young ladies. To

be sure, the Pembroke-table was between them, and he was the last person in the world to make a scene; only when people were in love, Mrs. Morton seemed to think that they were in the habit of overturning the chairs and tables.

But the next day she distinguished herself by a still more masterly stroke of policy.

It happened to be Sunday, and it had been planned that they should walk over to M——, to hear some famous preacher who was expected to give a charity-sermon on that day; and Frank had said at breakfast that they would have an opportunity of seeing Mr. Hardwicke in all his glory, for he would be in command of the detachment, Captain Cozens, with a praiseworthy choice of times and seasons, devoting the sabbath invariably to the consumption of an extra allowance of spiritous liquors and cigars, to enjoy which luxuries in perfection, it was his custom to remain in bed until the Monday morning.

Mrs. Morton had quite forgotten Mr. Hardwicke and his dragoons. Oh ! this would never do—it would be too dazzling — young girls were so fond of the military !—she must prevent such an alarming meeting.

“Do you know I think we wont *all* go to M——,” she said, with her pretty smile ; “I’ve been thinking it will be no great compliment to poor Mr. Clarke to empty his church, for I know the Grahams and Armstrongs are going to M——. I will stay at home, and perhaps my little Anne, if she has no great fancy for foreign preachers, will keep me company. Two will be enough—I only don’t want our pew to be quite vacant.”

“I will, with pleasure,” said Anne, quietly ; for matters were much too serious between her and Mr. Hardwicke, to make it any object to her to see him at church ; and as for the soldiers, it happened that Anne had no interest in that branch of our national defences—had he commanded a man-of-war she would gladly

have gone a hundred miles to catch a glimpse of it.

"I'll stop with you too," said Master Clavering: "I don't want to go to M——."

"We shall be a strong party then," said Mrs. Morton, smiling.

"I'm sure we don't want him," said Anne, looking to Mrs. Morton.

"Well, you will have me, whether you want me or not," said Master Clavering, angrily.

"Is not that speech a little ominous, my dear?" said Mrs. Morton laughing, as they rose from table.

"Oh! he is odious; I am beginning to hate him!" exclaimed Anne, impatiently. "It seems as if I was never to get rid of him. I do wish he was going to M——."

"Now that's very ungrateful, naughty Anne," said Mrs. Morton, pausing at the door of her dressing room: "mind and put on your furred cloak, and your dear little velvet bonnet—Parkindale church is terribly cold—

because poor Mr. Clavering 'worships the shadow of your shoe-tie;' you despise him—you will know better one day. Our sex are too often won by careless trifling suitors, whose whole demeanour seems to say they don't care whether they have you or not. I declare women often provoke me—almost as often as men. Are you ready, you quick little creature? and so I protest is Mr. Clavering, there he stands in the middle of the hall."

He was not quite ready; he was having a little discussion with his servant about a pair of gloves. Power was insisting on his wearing a fresh pair.

"You can't go to church with the ladies with that old pair, Mr. Clavering, and so I tell you," said Power.

"I shall," he retorted; "I've got them on now, and I won't take them off for anybody."

"Come, Mr. Clavering, it won't keep you a minute," said his servant, vainly pressing the new pair on his acceptance.

"I tell you I like these, they fit me," he persisted.

"These are just your size, sir," said Power.

"I don't believe you, and I can't bear the colour," said Master Clavering.

"I am sure, ladies, I don't know what to do, nor what method to take," said Power, casting an appealing glance towards Mrs. Morton.

Master Clavering, moved by this invocation, snatched the gloves from his servant, and flinging his old ones down on the ground, like a gauntlet of defiance, followed the ladies to the carriage, where, leaning his head against the side of the window, he murmured his saint's legend all the way to church.

"And this is the person my father thinks good enough for *me*," said Anne to herself, as her eye rested on Master Clavering's strange countenance. "I have a different opinion of my own deservings; I can love and value something higher than that: I have made a

choice that Hugh will approve when he knows it: I am not yet quite humble enough to accept the heart of Master Clavering."

And poor Master Clavering as he sat in church with his hands in Anne's muff, swinging his foot, and triumphing to think that she had not gone to M—— to see "that fellow Hardwicke," would have been a little surprised could he have looked "into her bosom's deepness," to behold her treasuring every word and gesture of his rival, and upholding herself as it were, in the absolute devotion she was proud to feel for him, by drawing a comparison between her two admirers, very remarkably to the disadvantage of the one who now enjoyed the pleasure of her society.

CHAPTER XII.

For ever fortune dost thou prove
An unrelenting foe to love :
And when we meet a mutual heart
Step in between, and bid us part ;
Bid us sigh on from day to day,
And wish and wish the soul away—
Till youth and genial years are flown,
And all the life of life is gone.—THOMPSON.

THAT fate does sometimes appear to set its face against the best intentions is a very melancholy truth. The next morning at breakfast, while some of the party were reading their letters, and Anne was eagerly trying to make out something that Ellis was telling Jane Anderson, about Frank having done all he could to make Mr. Hardwicke laugh in church, by pelting him with berries off the sprigs of holly, and Mr. Hardwicke shaking

them off his book without ever raising his eyes to see where they came from, Frank himself dashed into the room, holding out a long streaming play-bill printed in large red letters.

“Look here, Mamma!” he said, inflicting his usual salute on the side of Mrs. Morton’s pretty Mechlin cap: “see what that rascal Adams ought to have sent us a week ago. A performance at M——, for this very evening. I have written to order a box, and we must settle who shall go. You, of course, Miss Scawen, because you said the other day how much you would like to see one of Shakspeare’s plays acted, and this is ‘Cymbeline.’”

Mrs. Morton murmured something that sounded as if she wondered whether it would be too cold for Anne at the theatre; but Frank exclaimed at the idea,—

“Good heaven! my dear mother, when it is perfectly stifling; horrible, always at the

M—— theatre—a wretched little den of a place, that *can't* be cold, and always crammed from floor to ceiling. Besides, Miss Jarman plays to-night, and I think Miss Scawen would like her Imogen.”

“Oh, how much I should like it!” said Anne.

Mrs. Morton had no more to say. Frank ruled everything at Parkindale.

“And do you know,” continued Frank, “that Hardwicke leaves on Friday morning; he was going to write to you to say everything proper about not being able to come to you on Thursday; he has a good many things to look after, but I told him I would give his message instead; he means to drop in at the Armstrong’s for an hour, and that is as much as he can.”

There was just one moment in this speech when Anne felt her eyes grow dim, and a strong disposition to sink from her chair, but she struggled against the weakness, and her

cheek flushed ; and breathing only a little more quickly, she looked up as if to read in the faces around her, what they thought or felt at the tidings.

Mrs. Morton was looking at her uneasily. Agnes Moray with a little dash of triumph in her expression.

“ I am sure we shall miss him very much,” said James.

“ Very much, indeed,” said Agnes, with a glance at Master Clavering.

A dissenting noise from Master Clavering.

“ Shall we not ? ” said Mrs. Morton, venturing to appeal to Anne.

This was too much—her lips trembled—she broke into a faltering laugh, and left the room.

All that day she kept expecting that he would come. Every horse, every carriage that passed near the house, gave her a sickening hope that died away as the sounds faded in the distance.

One of the strongest features of her sudden attachment, was the entire trust with which her lover inspired her. None of that racking doubt and cloudy suspicion, which the poet has declared to be inextricably woven into the texture of love, ever disturbed her mind for an instant. From the first moment of her meeting him, he had singled her out alone; he had bestowed no notice upon any other person. She placed him beside Hugh in her thoughts as of one who could do no wrong. That he could forget her was as impossible as that she could cease to remember him. She had no perplexities, only the dread of separation on her mind, and she longed wearily for the moment of their meeting, that they might speak on the subject, and arrange if possible some means of communication during the long years that they must be parted.

He was waiting for them at the theatre. Mrs. Morton offered him a seat next herself, but with that quiet manner which seldom

deserted him, he said he could not think of crowding her, and that he had secured a seat in the adjoining box: by which means he contrived to place himself next to Anne, who was seated close to the compartment, and could converse with her without being overheard.

"You did not come to-day," said Anne, a little reproachfully.

"No. I could not have seen you alone; and I have been thinking over what is to be done."

"How pretty Miss Jarman looks, Miss Scawen?" said Frank Morton, leaning across the box: "with her fair hair and blue eyes. She is no bad representative of the matchless Imogen."

Anne smiled faintly, glanced at the stage, and then turned to Mr. Hardwicke.

"Can I write to you?" he asked.

"Oh! no. I was about to tell you, we can never write. Mrs. Scawen sees every letter

that comes into the house, and my father sends them himself to the post,—all go through his hands, and I never leave the park gates. 'Till Hugh comes home, I have no hope of hearing from you, or writing myself."

"This is what I thought," said Mr. Hardwicke: "and if I were to ask your father's permission to correspond with you, he would laugh at me; at our age we should be looked upon as fools incapable of forming a lasting attachment. My own father would say the same. I am implying no censure on Mr. Scawen."

"I am sure," said Anne, "I am fifteen—I can feel—I can see my own mind."

"And so can I, and I am nineteen: but I know what people would say. Now I have been thinking it over, and I can see but one way to place our fate beyond the reach of accidents."

He hesitated, and seemed unwilling to proceed.

"Oh, Miss Scawen!" cried little Ellis, who was seated on the other side of Anne: "that wretch, Iachimo! I could shoot him—he will—he *has* taken the bracelet! but *do* you think her husband will believe she gave it him? I don't see why he should."

"You will hear all about it," said Anne. "I don't know the story."

"Miss Scawen," said Frank, "is it not pretty to hear Miss Jarman say,

'But not away to-morrow?'

It comes in so well after her burst of anger. I wish we had thought of acting a play. I am sure you would be able to act."

"We might get up a scene or two," said James: "something from the 'Merchant of Venice.'"

"Or Hotspur," said Frank.

"I am sure we would not have Shakespeare," said Agnes, pertly; "we would get up a vaudeville."

rather forward
-12-15-
Anne, trembling with impatience, waited till they again turned to the stage.

"But I don't understand you," she said; "you cannot wish—you cannot mean that I should elope with you?"

"No, Heaven forbid!" said Mr. Hardwicke, gravely. "Besides, that could not be for many reasons. People cannot run off to India without some preparation—and I am too poor; I would not expose you to hardships;—but more than that, I would not expose you to the censure that always attaches itself to such a step."

"I thought so. I felt I could trust you better than myself," said Anne, fervently.

"Yet if, before I left, the ceremony were to pass between us," said Mr. Hardwicke, in a hurried manner,—“putting me out of the question, though I confess it would be to me an inexpressible comfort,—ask yourself whether you would not feel more tranquil during these silent years. knowing that no-

thing could ultimately separate us. Think it over, and let me know on Thursday. It will then be time."

"I wish to do what you think best," said Anne; "I have entire trust in you. I do not know how to act—I seem to have lost all power of thought."

She was trembling violently.

"I dread the idea of hurrying you into a promise that you might afterwards regret," said Mr. Hardwicke. "Think that we can never exchange a word or sign to say that we are living or dead, until your brother comes to protect you at Datchley; think whether there should not be some very strong bond between us to make that silence more endurable, — picture the future to yourself, and choose what will make you happiest;—for me, I shall wish I had never crossed your path, if I cast a shadow on your way. Oh! when we meet again I will make up to you for all."

“Do not think you add to my cares,” said Anne; “I am happier and prouder than I ever was. I think with you, that I should not feel so lonely if—”

A deep blush overspread her face.

“That scene is a little too *hazardée*,” said Mrs. Morton, observing Anne’s colour rise, and supposing she was listening to the dialogue on the stage; “my dear Frank, I had quite forgotten ‘Cymbeline,’—I wonder they don’t curtail some of these scenes a little more.”

“My dear mother, what an idea! It would be absolute sacrilege. The very finest poem, without exception, that Shakspeare ever wrote; don’t you think so, James?”

“Why, as a poem, I prefer ‘Troilus and Cressida,’” said James.

“But that is so philosophical,” said Frank.

“Good people all, the act scene is rising,” said Mrs. Morton, “and here comes Imogen.”

“I shall see you on Thursday,” added

Mr. Hardwicke, "think it over every way till then ; if you decide in my favour, I will arrange the rest."

"Think for me," said Anne, "I have told you I cannot, I am so confused ; you must judge for me as you would wish a person to act who will one day bear your name."

He could only press her hand,—they were all rising to go. Mrs. Morton declared it was beyond her to stay the after-piece. The charm of the place had vanished with Imogen. The Anderson girl's were drying their eyes ; Agnes was using her flacon of salts as if she had been overcome. Frank was pressing Mr. Hardwicke to return and sup with them.

He accepted the invitation, although he was obliged to return the same night to M——. But it gave him an opportunity of riding beside Mrs. Morton's carriage, while Anne leaned from the window, as if looking out upon the frosty night.

They hardly spoke to each other, but Anne used to look back on that drive beneath the brilliant stars, as the happiest hour she had ever passed.

A vague delight which she could not explain to herself, and a sadness which had in it no touch of sorrow, possessed her heart; she looked forward without terror to the future, for then he would have the right to protect her. The thought of her father's anger did not disturb her, he would know nothing until the time came for Arthur to claim her, and then Hugh would be on their side.

So she surrendered herself to all the intoxication of a first attachment, without the alloy of fear or anticipation; and Mrs. Morton, as she looked at her tranquil face at the supper-table, whispered to herself,—

“Thank goodness! the danger is over, and my little Anne is heart-whole.”

CHAPTER XIII.

Adown the stair
Stole on, and like a creeping sunbeam slid
From pillar unto pillar, until she reached
The gateway. TENNYSON.

Day thoughts feed nightly dreams,
And sorrow tracketh wrong
As echo follows song. H. MARTINEAU.

WHETHER any presentiment of ill crossed Master Clavering's mind or not, certain it is that he was in a horrible temper on the day of Lady Armstrong's party. He flatly refused to go, declaring that he had a dreadful pain in his chest, and that Anne should stay at home to keep him company.

On hearing this very cool announcement, Anne was frightened, and, like many frightened people, flew into a passion.

"Not go to Lady Armstrong's? that she

would! She had set her heart upon it. If he chose to be sulky and stay at home, his servant might make his tea. And as for the pain in his chest, she did not believe in it; it was a very convenient pain!—it always came when he was out of humour.”

Now Master Clavering could put himself in a stubborn sort of passion, too, and he unfortunately, retorted that—

“He supposed she wanted to go there to meet that fellow, Hardwicke.”

Then her eyes flashed fire. There was some truth in this.

“How dared he call people fellows, who were better than himself? He once called Hugh a fellow! *Her Brother*, Hugh! She had a great mind never to speak to him again!”

“Ah! Hugh,” said he, doggedly. “Much you are thinking about Hugh, *now*! I knew how long that would last.”

“I *am* thinking of Hugh!” she exclaimed,

with a stamp of her foot: "I wonder how you presume to say I forget him. He is the noblest creature that ever lived, and the handsomest, and not filled with jealousy and suspicion, like some other people. But you can only be friends with people who are friends with no one else; you can't see merit in any other person; and if your selfish ways are not humoured, you say spiteful things, and insolent things, too, sir, which I will not bear."

Her face was glowing, even her neck was crimson: but his feelings were less rapid.

"I can see little enough merit in *myself*, if you mean that," he said, with a kind of half melancholy simplicity that was almost touching: "and these fellows must be badly off, indeed, if they are not better off than I am in some respects;" and he pressed his hand on his heart: "but it is no pleasure to me to hear them cried up, particularly

Hardwicke; for all you said for Hugh just now, you meant for him."

We do not live in the Palace of Truth, and it is not usual to inform our friends when they are deceiving us, that we see through them. Anne coloured still more deeply, and became even still more angry.

"You grudge every body every bit of praise," she cried, speaking still faster. "You grudged Frank Morton praise for his dancing, and said he looked like a fool, hopping up and down like a sparrow. And you envied Mr. Anderson when he quoted those lines of Ben Jonson, and all the people admired them. You said they did not make sense. You are a dog in the manger."

"And what do I grudge Hardwicke?" he asked, sullenly.

"Everything," she exclaimed, recklessly; "for he is superior in everything to you and the others. And I *will* go to the Armstrongs; and if you choose to say I go to meet him,

you may say it ! even to papa you may say it, if you like, and I shall not care ! There is such a thing as growing desperate ! ”

“ What ! my pretty Anne in a passion ! ” said Mrs. Morton, coming into the room, and quite surprised at the state of excitement in which she found her,—standing opposite to Master Clavering’s chair with flashing eyes and clenched hands,—and not less surprised, perhaps, at Master Clavering’s quiescent attitude, with his head leaning as usual against the corner of the chimney-piece.

“ Yes ! she’s in a rage, she won’t stop at home with me,” said that young gentleman, coolly.

“ Oh ! but Mr. Clavering, we have all counted on this party, and Anne could not be spared ; perhaps you will be well enough after all, to go with us ? ”

“ No, I shan’t,” he replied ; “ and if she goes, I advise you to look sharp after her, for you would not much like it, if she gave you the slip.”

At this additional insult, Anne's overwrought nerves gave way, and she burst into tears.

"Oh ! little Anne, never mind, he did not mean it," said Mrs. Morton, good-naturedly, drawing Anne's head on her shoulder: "boys are so clumsy with their random shots. I really beg your pardon, Mr. Clavering, but you are all of you too rough for us. You can never understand the meaning of the word *feelings*; and so, after all, it is hardly your fault when you crush them."

But Master Clavering after standing silent for a minute, looking perfectly aghast, went suddenly up to her, and seized her hand.

"Oh ! but don't cry," he said, in a terrified voice; "I don't mind your being angry, but you must not cry. If you don't leave off, I'll shoot myself. You must stop, for I can't bear it."

"She *shall* stop presently, Mr. Clavering," said Mrs. Morton, smiling; "when next you

see her, she will have quite a cheerful face; but when our nerves are shaken, they won't stand still immediately,—another thing that you gentlemen cannot be brought to comprehend. I am going to take Anne to my dressing-room, and after a little quiet, and a little Eau de Cologne, she will be quite a different person."

So in this pleasant frame of mind they parted; Mrs. Morton leading Anne up stairs, and Master Clavering returning to the chimney-corner in a state of great despondency.

Now Mrs. Morton was quite prepared, without the shrewd advice that Master Clavering had given her, to keep her eye upon Anne. She hoped, and believed indeed, that this caution was quite unnecessary; but she knew that sometimes wilful young people would do very extraordinary things, and that even to escape from Master Clavering, Anne might take it in her head to run off with Mr. Hardwicke.

"You see how insolent he is, Mrs. Morton!"

exclaimed Anne, as she sat sobbing on the sofa in that lady's boudoir. "You see he dictates to me as if I belonged to him. To suppose that I would stay at home for *him*! To obey his crazy whims! Never! I would rather die."

"Why, dear little Anne," said Mrs. Morton, pausing in her occupation of dropping lavender on lumps of sugar: "this much I say for Mr. Clavering, poor young gentleman! that he has every reason to think his attentions very acceptable to your papa, and he has not quite tact enough to see how far they are acceptable to your papa's daughter. And remember, that hundreds of girls of the highest rank would be delighted at his notice, though it is so oddly expressed; for one day he will be a very important personage, with more thousands a year than you or I can imagine: so now take these lavender drops, like a good child, and lie down till it is time to dress."

Anne did as she was bid, and clasping her

hands over her eyes, she lay thinking long and deeply over her affairs. She saw plainly, now, that her father intended to marry her to Master Clavering some time or other. Mr. Clavering, she supposed, had the same intention: she would put it beyond their power. If she gave her hand to Mr. Hardwicke, all their arguments, their threats would not be able to move her: but she felt that any less decisive pledge would be insufficient. How could she stand against her father's harsh determination and violence of temper, if a mere promise had passed between them? when it came to the point she felt that she would not have courage enough to resist his will, and then, what misery! But once married, she *could* not comply with their demands; even Mrs. Scawen's malice would be wasted upon her, and she well knew with what acrimony her step-mother would foster such a dispute. If she had ever hesitated in consenting to Mr. Hardwicke's wishes, the scene of this morning had resolved her. Her

pride as much as her affection took the alarm. *She* to submit to such a miserable creature as Master Clavering! *She* to give him a right to control her! As she had said to Mrs. Morton: "She had rather die!"

There were no tears when Mrs. Morton came to see her dressed, but her eyes were glittering like stars. Her white muslin dress, always "curiously fine," was simply relieved by a strip of red velvet round the neck and waist, and a cluster of fine white chrysanthemums at the back of her hair, formed her only ornament.

"Always nice and artistical; though you hardly know what that means, yet," said Mrs. Morton; "and here, my love, is a great painted butterfly of a fan for you to flutter about. I observed you had not one at my dance."

"Oh! Mrs. Morton, you are a thousand times too good! I really—"

"I insist, my dear. Agnes Moray does a great deal with her fan, and, as she has con-

stituted herself your rival, pray let it be 'war to the fan' between you."

Anne smiled and accepted, and Frank Morton bursting in, to ask for some perfume for his handkerchief, interrupted the conversation.

"My darling Frank, do put the stoppers back into my bottles, and don't pull that shelf down upon your head," urged Mrs. Morton. "Oh! the awkwardness of these boys; give me the flacon—you always take too much."

"Do you like otto of rose, Miss Scawen?" said Frank, giving his handkerchief to his mother to perfume. "What a lovely handkerchief! how transparent it looks! but your dress always is,—you always cut out everybody else."

"I cut them out at a very cheap rate, then," said Anne, smiling, and holding out her muslin skirt.

"He is pulling your lace to pieces, Anne. I warn you," said Mrs. Morton, rescuing

Anne's handkerchief from her son's destructive fingers.

"Miss Scawen, I claim the first quadrille, you know," said Frank, fidgetting about, as his mother, with that caressing fondness that her manner always assumed towards him, stood arranging his hair and cravat in a more becoming manner.

"I think I must beg you to excuse me," said Anne; "I have a bad headache, and I am sure a single dance would make it so much worse, that I should be obliged to leave the room."

"Oh! this one dance!" cried Frank: "you will not be the worse for it, indeed; or, if you are, I will take up your cause 'against all comers,' and you shall not dance again."

"Oh! men, men!" said Mrs. Morton, smiling, and turning to Anne:—"in heaven there will be more poor than rich, and more women than men: at least, so says some learned divine. But, my dear, I advise you

to subscribe to his disinterested offer, for—” (she bent forward and whispered in her ear), “it will sound well to-morrow morning.”

Anne was as quick as lightning. She coloured, which blush, Frank, of course, set down to her being a good deal in love with him; but she saw directly that when Master Clavering should ask her, with his sullen look, with whom she danced, and she could reply, only with Frank Morton, things would go on much more peaceable between them.

When they all collected in the drawing-room to wait for the carriage, Master Clavering edged himself as near to Anne as he could, and stared hard at her for some moments.

“I say, I have had a letter from your father, he said, “would you like to see it? He comes here to-morrow, and we go straight back to King’s Cope. What do you say to that?”

“I have nothing to say against it,” said

Anne, steadily. "Why should I desire to remain here any longer. On the contrary, I had rather be moving."

For as Mr. Hardwicke was to leave the next day, she really felt relieved at the prospect of quitting the place where she had known him.

"Well, if you are not sorry, I am sure I am not," said Master Clavering. "It seems your mother-in-law finds the north does not agree with her. I am sure I thought she was too tough to mind anything. However, it is an ill wind that blows nobody any good, and this will blow us, thank heaven, over the border again."

Anne scarcely heard him. She was occupied with her own thoughts.

"Well! are you friends!" said Master Clavering.

"If you are sorry," said Anne.

"Well, I *am* sorry," he replied, after an effort.

So they shook hands as usual.

“Where’s my little Anne? she goes with me,” said Mrs. Morton, who was quite determined to keep her in sight the whole evening, and who, perhaps, thought she meant to make her escape during the drive. “Jane and Agnes go with Ella in the clarence. Mary and Anne with me. Are all ready?”

She expected that Mr. Hardwicke would be waiting for them: it was natural that he should hand Anne from the carriage, and assist in taking off her shawl, and though they exchanged a few sentences in a low voice, as they followed together into the dancing-room, she thought that very proper too. Frank came up to invite Miss Scawen for the first quadrille, and Mr. Hardwicke made no objection: he smiled as she withdrew her hand from his arm, said something in her ear, and then turning to little Ella, asked her to dance.

Ella could not contain her joy. To dance with

a real officer, with a pair of gold epaulettes, and she only twelve years old! and Agnes, she knew, would have given—oh! her best velvet bonnet for such a partner. Blushing, laughing, and hurrying, she yet could not help stepping back to Agnes, who sat biting her lips by the side of Mrs. Morton, and saying,—

“Cousin Agnes, I am going to dance with Mr. Hardwicke, and if you are not dancing, perhaps you would hold my bouquet for me?”

Agnes looked so extremely inclined to box her cousin's ears for this ill-timed speech, that Mrs. Morton said, laughingly,—

“You may give *me* the bouquet, Ella, for Agnes has not made up her mind yet, whether she will dance or not; now *I* am sure to sit still.”

“Oh! thank you, Aunt Morton,” said Ella: “perhaps we had better take our places; shall we have Frank and Miss Scawen for our *vis-à-vis*, Mr. Hardwicke?”

“What a little ready-made coquette it is !” said Mrs. Morton, laughing.

“An odious, conceited animal !” exclaimed Agnes, indignantly. “These children’s parties turn their heads, and make them so forward and affected, there’s no bearing them. I will never suffer any children of mine to go out to them.”

“Did you go to many, my dear ?” asked Mrs. Morton, innocently.

“I am sure Aunt, I don’t remember,” returned Agnes ; “but my opinion of them is the same.”

“Oh ! so is mine, my dear,” said Mrs. Morton, playing with Ella’s bouquet.

Most perseveringly did Mrs. Morton watch Anne through the first three quadrilles ; then her attentions began to flag a little ; and, during *la pastorale*, just in the part where her dearest Frank was executing those steps which had made Master Clavering compare him to a sparrow, it happened that there came

into the room the very nobleman who has previously been mentioned as one of her great admirers.

Now it chanced that there were few people in the world whom she esteemed and respected so highly, and therefore though it was entirely out of her ideas to give him her hand, she never thought of receiving him ungraciously. She made room for him on the sofa, shook hands with him very cordially, her sweet face lighted up with smiles and dimples, and when he began, as he always did, to talk about her boys, she became so deeply engrossed in the conversation that she really quite forgot what was going on around her.

He was a little elderly man, rather stout in his figure, with grey hair, and an air of freshness and refinement that would prevent his being mistaken for an ordinary person. He was the representative of a very ancient barony; and as he had sufficient kindness to plan a

thousand benevolent schemes, and sufficient wealth to carry them all out, he was very highly regarded in his neighbourhood.

All Mrs. Morton's friends and well-wishers had urged her again and again to accept this nobleman. It would be such an excellent match—it was really, in their opinion, *wrong* to neglect any proper means of advancement; and then it was a duty she owed her sons to secure for them such a powerful friend—it was really almost robbing them to refuse; for Lord S—— had a great deal of money to leave.

Now Mrs. Morton had read in history of ladies who had accepted of very powerful protection for themselves and their families, such as was not indeed exactly sanctioned by the Church, but was nevertheless a source of great wealth and advancement; and she thought much better of these ladies than of any respectable woman who profaned the sacrament of marriage by any interested motives.

But there was no talk of marriage that evening; Lord S—— was too well-bred to be always bringing forward the same topic,—they were conversing very busily about Frank.

All at once she lifted up her eyes. The quadrille was over, and she did not know how many quadrilles besides. And where was Anne? and where was Mr. Hardwicke?—not in the room,—that her quick glance told her in a moment. She started up in alarm.

“You must excuse me, Lord S——,” she said, trying to laugh off her embarrassment; “but I have a little stranger with me, whom I don’t see, and I am afraid she will be standing about, and catching cold at some open window. *(The door)*

Lord S—— immediately offered to assist in the search, and giving his arm to Mrs. Morton, they proceeded through the rooms.

Now Anne and Mr. Hardwicke were sitting quietly on the staircase all the time.

The house was old and oddly built, and the staircase did not face you as you entered the hall. It ran quite across the back, and as the balustrades were thick and twisted, people might be sitting on the steps a long time without being observed. He had told her all his arrangements for their hasty and imprudent marriage early the next morning, and she had listened with that entire acquiescence in everything he said, which is invariable on the woman's side when she is really in love. And he had put a turquoise ring on her finger, and kissed her hand a great many times; and then she unfastened the golden heart from Hugh's bracelet, and strung it on a slender gold chain, and hung it round his neck.

"There," she said, trying to smile, "that is really a part of my heart which I trust with you till you return, then you shall give it back to me."

"I will," he said, gravely; "and if I die,

I will leave directions that it shall be restored to you. Do not think me dead, or false (he added after a pause) till you receive this."

Then Anne began to cry, and it seemed as if her head was resting on his shoulder, for it is wonderful how she started up on hearing Mrs. Morton's clear voice in the hall.

"Anne, dear Anne! do tell me if that is your white frock I see through the banisters? Oh, yes, she pops up her dear little head! A thousand thanks, Lord S——; now *don't* let me keep you in the cold."

She was so impressive that Lord S—— obeyed her at once, and went into the card-room.

"Miss Scawen found the dancing-room too warm," said Mr. Hardwicke, calmly.

"She must have found the staircase anything but warm, I should think," said Mrs. Morton, anxiously; "and no shawl, naughty Anne; come and get a hot cup of coffee before we start."

*Yes
are
this
are
so
oh*

“Come,” said Anne, turning round, and offering her hand to Mr. Hardwicke. He placed it on his arm.

“Oh, dear me!” thought Mrs. Morton. “I am half afraid all this looks very like something serious. But it can’t be helped and this is the very last evening they meet,—so after all, it is not very alarming,—I only hope the poor little thing won’t fret about it.”

She was not fretting then, that is certain. She took the cup of coffee that Mr. Hardwicke prepared for her, and suffered him to shawl her, and lead her to the carriage very calmly, and she shook hands with him, and wished him good bye, just as the others did; much more tranquilly than Mrs. Morton, who clasped his hand quite affectionately, and spoke her farewell in a faltering voice, and then throwing herself back in the carriage with tears in her eyes, said, with a sob,—

“It is a horrid word, that ‘good-bye,’

and then when I see a young creature like that, driven out into the world, I can't help thinking of my own boys."

"Oh! it is very melancholy," said Agnes, carelessly.

"But he danced with me, Aunt Morton, I shall never forget that," said Ella; "and he talked to me, and asked me when I should go back to my papa at Calcutta.—I only wish I knew. He has got my parcel safe. He complimented me on my dancing. Do you know whom he danced with afterwards, Miss Scawen?"

"There, that is enough!" interrupted Agnes, not suffering Anne to reply. "I do believe you would go on all night long about your dear Mr. Hardwicke. Nobody cares whether he danced any more; I think him very stupid, for he told me he could not waltz."

It rather surprised Anne when they returned, to find that Master Clavering was

waiting up for them. He came out into the hall, and singling Anne from among the rest, took hold of her cloak.

"Come, I am glad to see you back again;" he said.

"Why what could induce you to sit up, Master Clavering?" asked Anne.

"Never mind," he replied; "but go to bed, you are as pale as death; I thought you were never coming back."

"It is a long way to Lady Armstrong's," observed Mrs. Morton.

"Ah! and it is a long way to a good many other places," he remarked; "however, good night!"

"Now don't you call him mad, Mrs. Morton?" said Anne, as they parted on the stairs.

"But mad, nor' nor' west;" returned Mrs. Morton, smiling; "sleep well, little Anne."

She did not mean to sleep. The fire was still burning in her room. She drew the logs together, dressed herself in her walking

clothes, with some difficulty, for she was not used to attend upon herself, and sat down on the hearth rug to wait. She felt chilly, feverish, sick; she was not *thinking* about the step she was going to take; she was only *feeling*. She leaned her burning forehead on her hands, and sat listening for the sound of the clock.

At last it struck six.

That was the time at which he had said he would be waiting for her at the bottom of Mrs. Morton's garden.

She tied her bonnet, found her gloves, and crept softly down stairs. She did not tremble *then*, she felt as if she had a right to act for herself. When she unfastened the hall door and looked out, she found the morning dark and drizzling,—that did not signify, she stepped down upon the terrace, and walked bravely forward. He was there—he had been waiting. He told her the church was two miles off, and said some-

thing about the dampness of the morning. But they spoke very little.

With his arm round her, and his great horseman's cloak wrapped over hers, she felt neither wet nor fatigued. Part of the way she knew very well,—the bridge over the stream, and the long lane at the foot of the hill,—but at the end of the lane they turned into a wilder country, a kind of ravine between steep barren hills; at last the ravine seemed to widen, the hills sank into mere undulations of the ground. Beyond, a little lake was set like a silver wedge into the valley, and by its side stood a small hut of a church, the resort of the few farmers and labouring families of the district.

He led her through the small church-yard, thick with humble graves, and into the rustic church, where two candles were burning, to enable the pastor to go through the service.

He was miserably poor and discreditable, and the bribe which Mr. Hardwicke was half

ashamed to offer him, was a treasure that he had never hoped to possess. I believe he would have consented to bury her alive for half the sum. Two farm labourers, one the father of the child whom Mr. Hardwicke had saved; the other, some Scotch cousin of his, were witnesses to the ceremony, which the minister read through his nose, with a most frightful Scottish brogue. The labourers were not in the least interested in penetrating the mystery. They got more than a week's wages for standing there, and there they accordingly stood. They saw a girl in a long blue cloak, and a straw bonnet, and one of them thought her name was Ramsey, while the other fancied it was Colquhoun. Once or twice in their lives afterwards they referred to it as a sort of date. "The morning on which the young English chap married the Scottish lassie;" and that was all the impression it ever made upon them. The ceremony was soon over.

When they went out into the air, the rain had ceased, and the daylight was just beginning to steal over the hills.

Anne would not suffer Mr. Hardwicke to walk home with her: he pleaded hard to be allowed to do so: the last few minutes that they might ever pass together he was very unwilling to surrender; but she was positive. "I have a fancy, Arthur, she said, and you must humour it, that we should part on holy ground."

It would have been very perverse if he had refused her anything just then. So he led her down to the little gate, and kissed her hands, and opened it for her to pass through. Their leave-taking could not be very demonstrative, for the witnesses had not yet gone away. But nobody saw them, for the minister was counting his gold in the porch, and the labourers were looking for their spades, which they had laid behind a gravestone, when they went into the church.

CHAPTER XIV.

Like to the falling of a star,
Or as the flights of eagles are,
Or like the fresh spring's gaudy hue,
Or silver drops of morning dew,
Or like a wind that chafes the flood,
Or bubbles which on water stood ;
Even such is man, whose borrowed light,
Is strait called in and paid to-night.

HENRY KING.

ANNE found her way back as easily as she had anticipated. They had been so late the night before, that the servants were not risen, and she fastened the hall-door so that they would not see that any one had been out. She undressed, and went to bed, and fell almost immediately into a deep sleep ; which some persons will do when their fate is decided, though they have been very restless

while it was in suspense. She slept so long that Mrs. Morton had sent in several times to ask how she was, before she awoke. Then she had her breakfast in her room; and her kind hostess coming in to see that her coffee was hot and her toast properly made, was delighted to find that she did not look either pale or disconsolate. On the contrary, sitting up in bed, with the breakfast-tray before her, her cheeks warm and flushed from sleep, and her rich hair escaping in tendrils from her pretty little nightcap, she presented a very comfortable picture. Mrs. Morton, whose opinion about her feelings fluctuated on an average every half hour, now took a decisive stand. "What a simpleton I was," she thought, "to fidget myself so wretchedly about nothing—absolutely a fancy of my own. I know, or rather I did know once, what it was to be in love; and you, my little Anne, with your luminous eyes, have yet to learn what it means. I wonder now what it was

she felt for young Hardwicke. I suppose that sort of liking which would in time have ripened into love." So she sat on the edge of the bed, gossiping cheerfully with Anne about the party, and about Lord S——; how he had inquired who Anne was, and had said some very pretty things about her, which Mrs. Morton would not repeat, for fear of making her vain; and then she laughed about Master Clavering, and declared that she had thought it was his ghost coming out to meet them in the hall, and told Anne to laugh at him well about his illness, which could not be very bad, if he was able to sit up till four o'clock in the morning.

Anne was very young, and now that everything was settled and the parting over, her spirits rose again. She talked quite cheerfully to Mrs. Morton, avoiding, however, all mention of Mr. Hardwicke's name until she rose to dress.

Her first care, as soon as her maid left

her, was to secure her wedding-ring. Among the many pretty trinkets her mother had given her, was a small velvet bag thickly embroidered with gold thread, which had been used to hold an amulet, or, perhaps, some relick of peculiar sanctity. This she hung to a slender gold chain similar to the one she had given Mr. Hardwicke; she had eight or ten of them as fine as threads, which were worn together like a skein, to support an eyeglass or a locket. In this little bag, not so large as a crown piece, she deposited the wedding-ring and the turquoise, determining to wear them always round her neck. Then if Mrs. Scawen were to demand what she was wearing, she could produce the velvet bag; and she sewed it up so securely, that any one not knowing the opening might easily think it had none. It happened, however, that it was never challenged.

Master Clavering received her with great glee when she appeared in the drawing-room.

He was in very good humour, and said nothing about the pain in his chest. Indeed, what with his satisfaction at Mr. Hardwicke's departure, and his own near prospect of returning to England, he became quite animated, and made a great impression on the Anderson girls, who never forgot his future destinies.

Mr. and Mrs. Scawen arrived before dinner.

"Trust her for coming safe," said Master Clavering, who was standing by Anne at the window. "That sort of woman is sure never to get her neck broke. However, they take us home to-morrow, and so we won't quarrel with them."

"I think you are very ungrateful," said Anne, "when you have been so kindly treated here."

"Very likely," said Master Clavering; "but I shall be glad enough to see *you* safe out of the house, and so I tell you. Hardwicke is gone, but I don't half like that fellow Anderson, ugly as he is."

Anne began to laugh, but she checked herself, for her father and his wife came into the room.

She felt that embarrassment natural to a person who knows that he ought to be glad to meet a relation whom, from circumstances, he had much rather avoid. However, she advanced and shook hands with her parents just as Master Clavering did.

Mrs. Scawen received her with more of a vinegar aspect than usual; but Mr. Scawen looking at her attentively, said to his wife in a tone of interest, "I don't think Anne looks well, Mrs. Scawen."

Any mark of kindness was so unusual from him, that her composure was almost destroyed. Her lips trembled, and the tears rose to her eyes. All the independence of her conduct she had defended to herself on the plea that she was not cared for; that her father did not wish to advance her happiness, and that therefore she had a right to secure it herself,—the right

that every creature has to protect themselves from injury. But if it were otherwise—if he really loved her—she tried to think that impossible—but the words rang in her ears, and disturbed and distressed her for a long time.

Anne might be excused for crying heartily when the time came for taking leave of Mrs. Morton; the bright widow shed a few tears herself. Mrs. Scawen said every bitter thing that could be imagined to Anne, when they were fairly on their road, always taking for granted that she was crying at returning to her home. This is a common habit with bad tempers, especially if they have baited and teased their victim into crying, they then allege some reason which they know to be untrue to account for the tears, and it becomes a very fertile topic to expatiate upon.

But Master Clavering's clear head (for though shallow it was very clear) would not allow her to escape so easily.

“ We are both glad to go home, *she* and *I*,” he said, very distinctly ; “ we have had enough of it, and so it seems have you. But she is sorry to part with Mrs. Morton, who has been very kind to her, and who is an uncommonly pretty woman, and I only wish she was sitting opposite to me at this moment.”

Mr. Scawen laughed, and Mrs. Scawen dared not reply. Although harsh to her himself, he always seemed to like Master Clavering to defend his daughter.

They returned by way of Carlisle, and spent the Sunday in that ancient city.

Anne confided to Master Clavering (whose amiability had redoubled when they had fairly crossed the Eden) that she had the most eager desire to go to the cathedral, and she was afraid that if there was another church to be had, her father would go thither ; so when they met at breakfast on Sunday morning, that young gentleman announced his plans in the following manner :—

“I want to go to the cathedral, and I shall take *her* with me.”

As this arrangement was not quite usual, Mr. Scawen amended it by proposing that they should all go together, to which Master Clavering offered no opposition.

The cathedral, though very ancient, is one of the smallest in England, and being built of the red stone that abounds in that district, is deficient in the venerable and delicate colouring that belongs to most of those glorious buildings. But the choir is remarkably fine—the carved oak screen and organ, as black almost as ebony; and on the tower is that little corner turret, constantly to be met with in the northern churches, and which served as a look out when border towns were residences much more exciting than agreeable. It happened that a dignitary of the cathedral was just dead, and the choir was hung with black, while the choristers and officiating clergyman wore broad black scarfs across their white

surplices ; the music chaunted was in character with the costume ; the psalms were sung in a minor key—the anthem was one of those rich pieces of mournful harmony that thrill to the very centre of the heart. As Anne knelt with her head bowed down, stifling her sobs, and stealthily wiping away her tears, the thought was perpetually crossing her mind, “ Have I done wrong—have I misjudged my privilege—ought I to have acted against my father’s will—am I not living in deceit ? ”

With the tokens of recent death before our eyes, the conscience is apt to become more exacting.

In the opposite pew there sat some part of the deceased clergyman’s family ; the ladies shrouded in black silk hoods that concealed all but the lower part of the face. One of these was a girl of singular beauty, her mouth and chin shaped with the utmost delicacy, but as white as ivory. Now and then a tear fell from her cheek down upon her clasped hands ; but

the beautiful lips were calm in their expression, and might have been selected by a sculptor as a type of resignation.

Anne kept thinking—" *She* could never have deceived—she could never have rebelled against her father (it was her uncle, by the way);—or she could not kneel so calmly under the roof where he rests, and pray for peace. *I* ought to pray for pardon. And so she did—trembling so much all the time that Master Clavering thought she was cold, and coolly taking Mrs. Scawen's sable tippet from the pew-door where it was hanging, put it over Anne's shoulders. But it must be confessed that when the service was over, and she was removed from the influence of the black scarfs and the wailing music, her spirits rose again, and she recovered her complacency. She was sure Arthur never would have advised her to do what was wicked. Her father did not love her, and he meant to make her miserable; and as for concealing the step she

had taken, why, of course, it was impossible to do otherwise ; and neither Mr. nor Mrs. Scawen had any right to her confidence !

In fact, she was quite ready to walk to the castle, and enjoy the prospect, and the recollections of the place. Certainly the building is not handsome. No graceful turrets—no circular towers—no majestic gateways to be seen. Queen Mary's tower is a stubborn-looking house, and the unsightly red stone of which it is built won't even allow it to look ancient. But the view from the ramparts is magnificent. Around, to the north and east the Cheviot and Cumberland hills stretch into the horizon, swelling and sinking, and melting into every softened tint of grey and lilac ; on the other side lies the town—farther on, the masts of the shipping which come up the river, and there winding among the fields and trees, the beautiful Eden may be traced in streaks of light. But it was very cold—I should think it always

was, at Carlisle ; and Master Clavering ordered the party down. It was curious to see how Mr. Scawen acquiesced in everything he proposed.

As they were leaving the castle, an officer, crossing the court with some papers in his hand, turned and stared, and turned and stared again at Anne, with that brutal audacity which can only be perfectly acquired in a barrack. A stare made up of a kind of gaping curiosity, mingled with a savage air of defiance, but happily (when directed to a modest woman) not a particle of approval or admiration.

This put Master Clavering into a very sulky temper.

“ Did you see that fellow ? ” he asked, looking sharply at Anne, who was walking along quite unconscious of what passed.—“ Why don’t you wear a veil ? An insolent dog ! ”

Anne started, looked up, and beholding only at the gateway a very peaceful sentinel stand-

ing in a grey wrapper, wondered what her companion could mean.

“ I sometimes think you are crazy, Master Clavering,” she said. “ Did you fancy that sentry looked at us, that you were so angry.”

“ Never mind,” he muttered, “ it was not your fault—some people are handsome ; and some people had better keep their eyes to themselves. However when once you get back to King’s Cope, there you will stay — that is one comfort.”

It might be a comfort ; but Anne sighed heavily.

Master Clavering remained with them but a few days after they returned. His father had arrived in London, and had procured his commission ; and Power was directed to pack him up and take him off to town.

His attention was very much divided during the last two days between Anne and his humming-tops, until it occurred to him to have the trunk destined for those treasures brought

into the study, and to enlist her services in helping him to pack them up.

This took a long time, because he insisted on spinning every one in turn before he put it away, and Anne, kneeling with her lap full of Spanish wool, had to wait till the last sounds had murmured away, and the top had whirled and twisted itself under the sofa, or among the legs of the table, before she was allowed to proceed.

But she packed them in such a masterly manner that he frequently called her a good fellow, and insisted on shaking hands with her three several times; and in the evening he said to Mr. Scawen, that he did not know what on earth he should do without Anne. and he wished to goodness he could take her with him.

Mr. Scawen smiled, but merely said that he hoped they should all have the pleasure of seeing Mr. Clavering at King's Cope on some future occasion.

Not a word about Anne, to her great delight. Then Miss Elder came back, and Anne found herself quietly restored to the study, and everything going on just as before her visit.

Then she had time really to think of the terrible step she had taken. In the excitement of her journey, and the distress of leaving Mrs. Morton, and even the occupation that Master Clavering's stay produced in the house, she had not felt able to reflect; and, except that momentary twinge in the cathedral, she had never reproached herself for what she had done. But now she would often sit crouching over the study-fire, turning the affair over in her mind in every possible point of view, till she felt sick at heart, and so confused in her head, that Miss Elder found it impossible to extract from her the usual amount of literature. She was too young to have a great and perpetual care weighing on her mind. Mr. Scawen remarked that she grew thin — and Miss Elder feared that her holidays at Park-

indale had not done her any good : which guess came remarkably near the truth ; though not exactly in the sense in which it was made.

But sometimes, when she was sure of being quite alone, and she had drawn her velvet bag from her bosom, and pressed it to her lips, with the delightful consciousness that absence could do nothing against their love, all her doubts and difficulties would seem to give way at once.

As to Arthur, nothing could ever shake his constancy, she was sure. She pictured him retaining, year after year, her image in his heart, as strongly as his was impressed upon her own at that moment.

And as months passed on without her hearing even Master Clavering's name mentioned by her father, she began to hope that he never had the scheme of uniting them, and that that singular young gentleman would never more be a source of vexation to her.

In the Spring she was taken to London, that

she might have the advantage of masters — but this made no great difference in her habits — only the study at the back of a London house was not nearly so pleasant as the study at King's Cope; and her daily walk in Kensington Gardens was not so much to her taste as her rambles by the brook in the park at home.

In music she made so remarkable a progress, that her masters did not know how to extol her enough. She always evinced a very strong dislike to dancing, which Miss Elder could not comprehend, and tried to overcome by a good deal of sensible argument. But Anne had quietly determined in her own mind that when she went into society she would never dance, and she felt that these guinea lessons would be a source of contention and reproach from Mrs. Scawen. That lady would often upbraid her with their residence in town, declaring that all that *enormous* expense was incurred in the vain hope of making Anne an accomplished and

elegant young woman—and that it was grievous to think of the hundreds that were being lavished upon her education, without any chance of an adequate return. As she was growing so beautiful, that Miss Elder really felt nervous at walking with her through the streets, perhaps Mrs. Scawen's remarks were kindly meant to balance the admiring looks with which she was greeted whenever she stirred from the house. As Anne grew older, and, it must be confessed, haughtier, Mrs. Scawen endeavoured to domineer over her still more palpably. The less her power really was, the more she made a show of thwarting her in every trifling thing. In the colour of her dresses, for instance, she made a point of insisting upon whatever Anne disliked; and if she took a seat on the sofa, her step-mother usually ordered her off to a chair. Always treating these petty annoyances with silent contempt, always relying on herself, forming her own views, acting on her own impulses, and at an age when the character

is generally in some confusion, she was in danger of becoming altogether headstrong and unamiable. Neither her father nor Mrs. Scawen had ever succeeded in making her do anything that she had resolved not to do, and there was every reason to suppose that they would not be more successful in future, should any cause of dissension arise between them. Very earnestly did Miss Elder labour to strengthen her principles, and to soften the scornful tendencies of her character; but at that early age, feeling generally supplies the place of principle—so that, when the feelings are well-directed, people do not find this out; and, when they do find it out, it is usually in a disagreeable manner.

She saw her brother Henry twice during the three seasons she spent in town; the first time he did not speak to her at all: the second time he remarked to her that he thought she was growing rather a fine woman. As there did not exist between them the famili-

arity of relations, Anne took the remark as an insult, just as if a stranger had made it — and turned from him with a deal of beautiful scorn on her lip.

Sometimes, from hints that passed between her father and his wife in her presence, she had reason to think that Henry was very extravagant, and that his moral conduct was displeasing to Mr. Scawen — and this rather heightened the contempt with which she regarded him.

One day, Miss Elder was endeavouring to soften down some bitter expression that she had let fall, relating to the indifference or dislike with which she was regarded in her home.

“Oh ! Miss Elder,” she replied, hastily ; “it is in vain to try and deceive myself. Would you believe that, one day, a long time ago, I fancied Papa cared about me, from something he said, and I actually distressed myself, thinking what a bad return I had made

him ; but I very soon found my mistake, and at least," she added, laughing, but with her eyes full of tears, "that source of uneasiness is entirely at an end !"

Poor Miss Elder found it best to generalise her remarks : it did not do to descend to particulars.

One day, one golden morning—the brightest that she knew for years (it was some six or eight months after her visit to Scotland) — she saw Arthur Hardwicke's name in the paper.

Mrs. Scawen strictly forbid her ever taking up a newspaper, and, like most other young people, she had neither interest nor curiosity about public affairs, and but for this prohibition, would have remained wholly indifferent to this branch of literature. But, one morning, Mr. Scawen, who had called her into his study to give her some trifling direction, was obliged to go up stairs to speak to a workman, and desired her to await his return.

The *Morning Post* was lying on his desk. She snatched it up, and the first thing that met her eye was the name of Mr. Hardwicke.

It was a panegyric of his conduct during the shipwreck of the troop ship in which he was embarked off the Cape of Good Hope. To the courage and coolness of Lieutenant Hardwicke might be ascribed, in great measure, the excellent conduct of the troops on board, who were landed without hurry or confusion, and with very trifling loss. Mr. Hardwicke being the very last person to leave the sinking vessel, which went down a very few minutes after almost every soul had been conveyed to shore a few miles from Cape Town.

Anne kissed the paper; she pressed it to her heart—she trembled—she laughed—she cried—she did not know how to give a voice to her joy.

She did not see the account which followed,

of the lamented death of Captain Cozens, who was stated to have been equally beloved and respected by a numerous circle of friends, and who met his fate on that melancholy occasion, because, being in the most disgusting state of intoxication, as fast as people carried him on deck, he persisted in tumbling down the companion-ladder again, until every one became too much engrossed by their own safety to pay any further attention to him, particularly as it was the general opinion that in the last fall he broke his neck.

In consequence of this valuable life being prematurely sacrificed, Mr. Hardwicke succeeded to the command of his troop. But of this Anne knew nothing. At last, at the close of her third season in London, she was told by her parents that her education was finished. She had learned all that it was proper for a young lady to know. She could play, and dance, and draw flowers ; she could speak German and Italian ; she was now to read no

more history, nor was it necessary that she should have anything more to say to the English poets. She was to be introduced into society, and Mrs. Scawen “hoped very much that she would not disgrace her family by any ignorant remarks or awkward habits. It certainly had pleased heaven to deny her either beauty or talent; but if she was modest and unassuming, perhaps her friends might be able to make allowance for her defects.”

She was therefore told as soon as they arrived in Lancashire, that a dinner was to be given, on her account, to the neighbouring families, that her name was to be engraved on Mrs. Scawen's cards, and she was thenceforward to be considered “*out!*”

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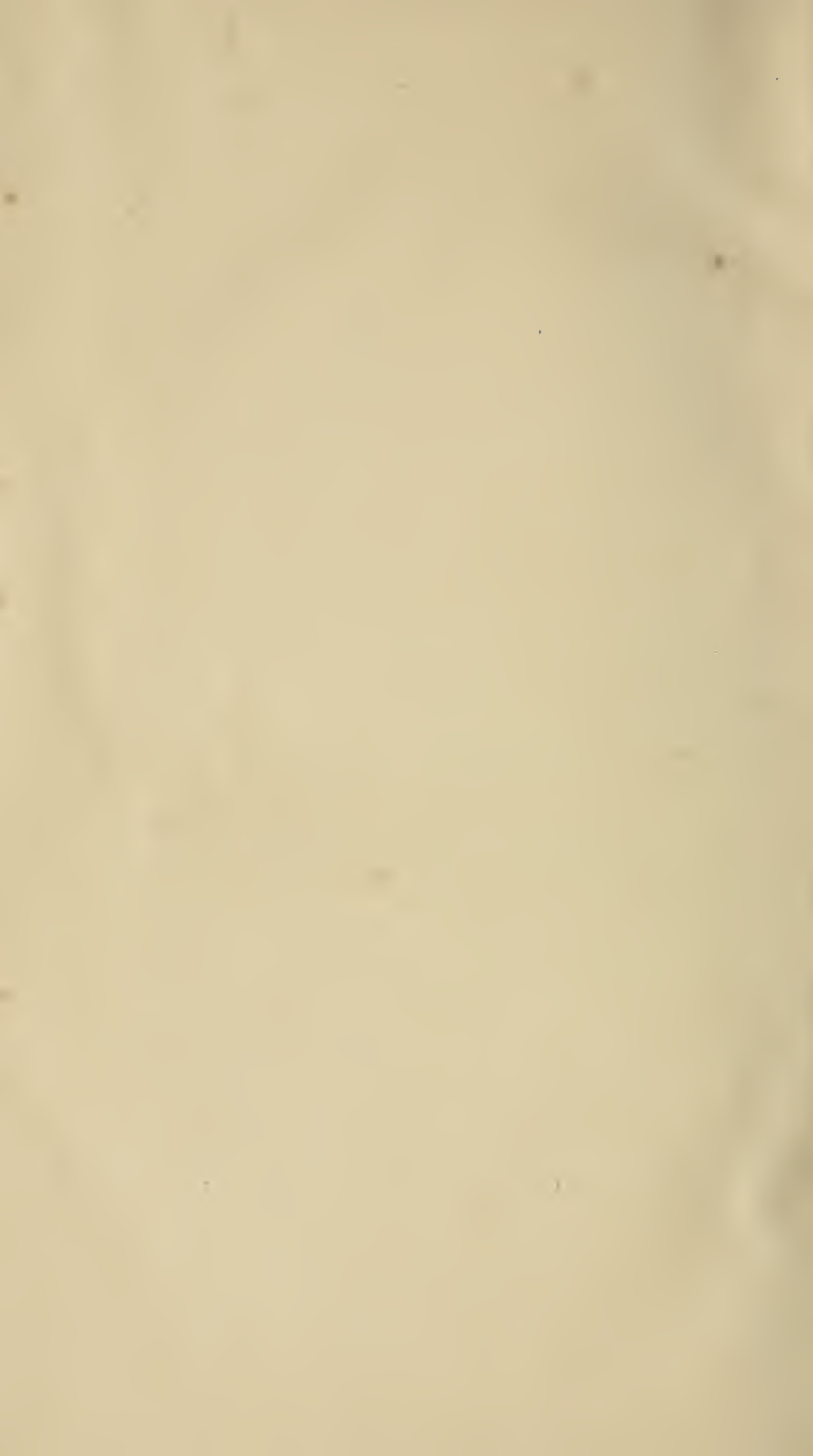
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